

Investi GATORS

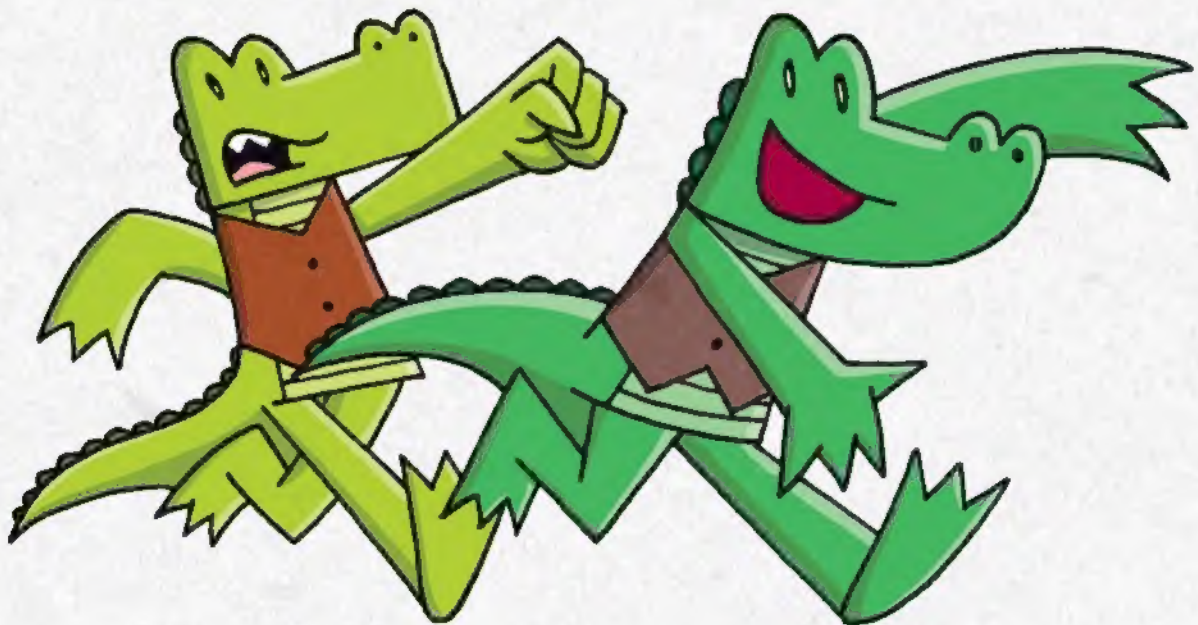


John Patrick Green

Investi GATORS

The word 'GATORS' is written in a bold, green, 3D-style font with a black outline. A magnifying glass icon is positioned over the letter 'A', with its handle pointing downwards and to the left. The magnifying glass has a silver frame and a clear lens.

Investi GATORS



written and illustrated by
John Patrick Green

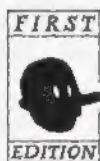
with color by Aaron Polk



First Second
New York

:01

First Second



Chapter 1

"In a world plagued by crime, corruption, and confusion..."



"One organization works in the shadows to right these wrongs..."



"Sending its **TOP AGENTS** to solve any mysterious mystery..."

These are our stories!



INVESTIGATORS

ARE
ON THE
CASE!



Mango! Get offa
my case!



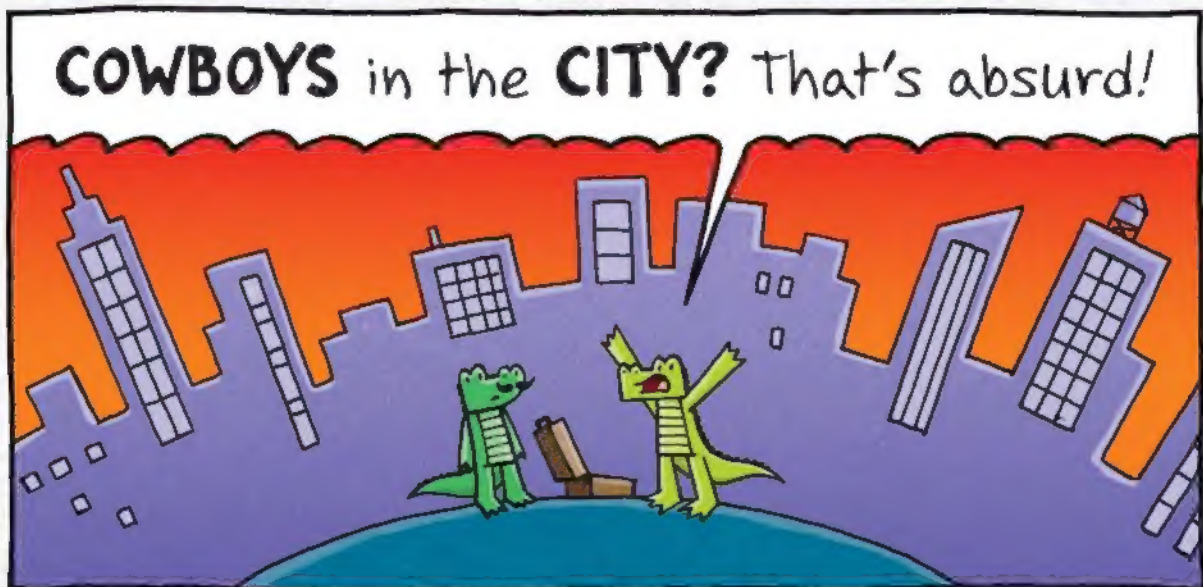
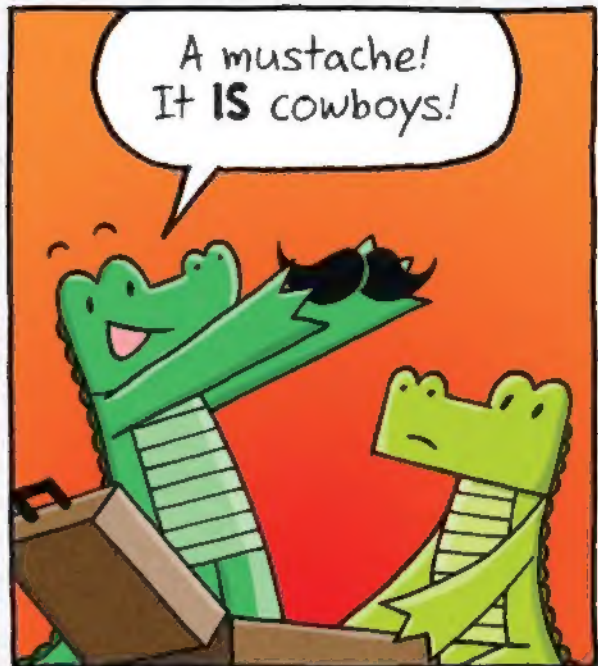
Oh. Sorry,
Brash.

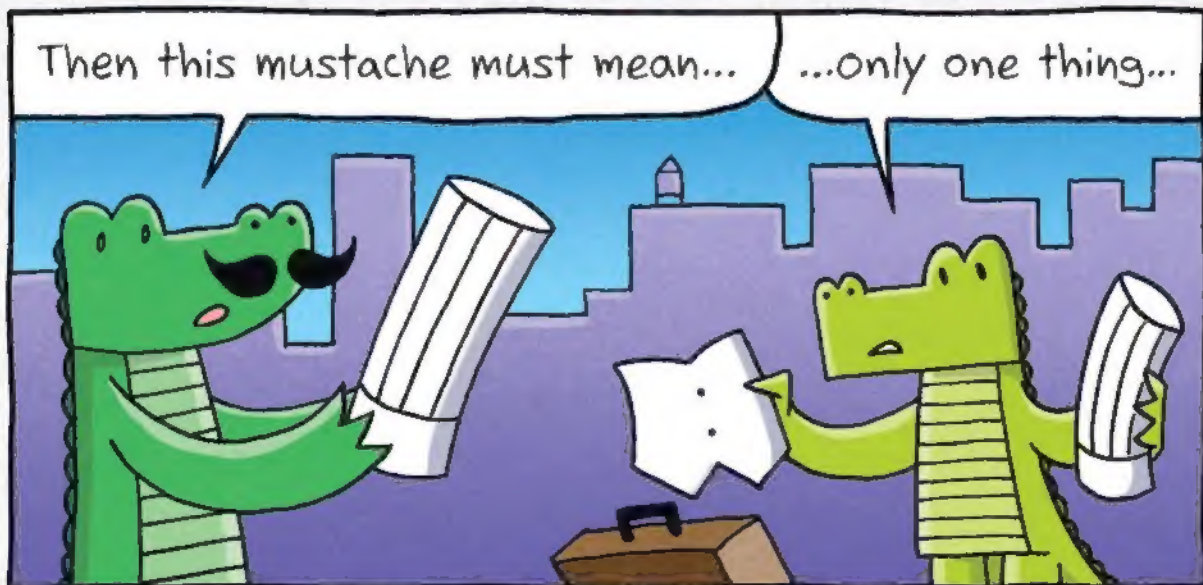


Our new V.E.S.T.*s are in this S.U.I.T.**case, along
with our next undercover assignment!



*Very Exciting Spy Technology **Special Undercover Investigation Teams





PIZZA!

CUPCAKES!



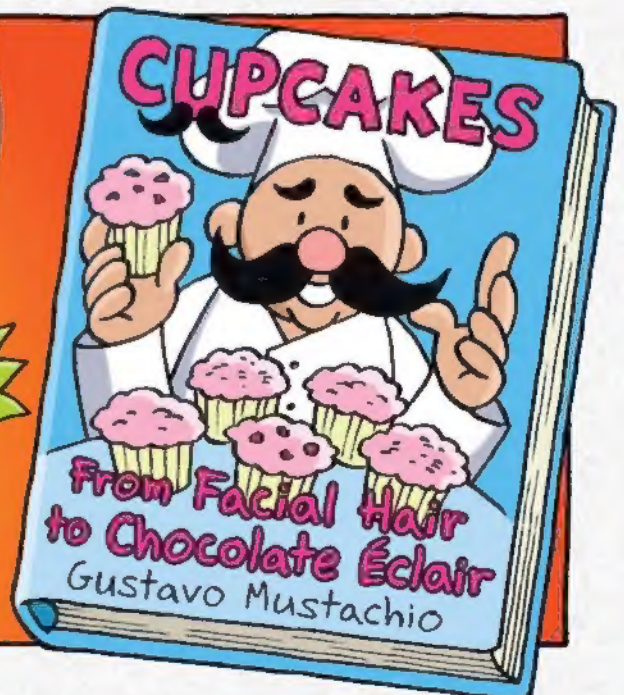
What? Mango, how do you get pizza from a mustache?

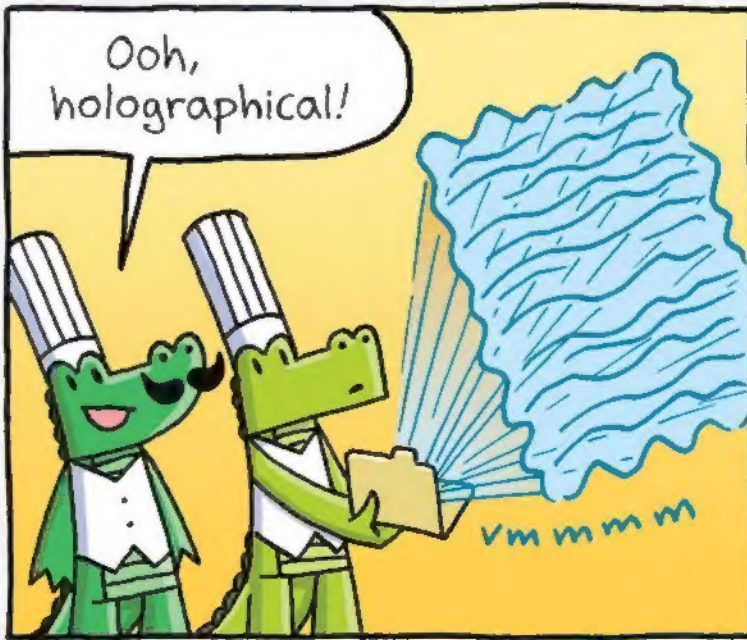


Oh, I dunno, like, every pizza box EVER?



Well, then I guess you're not familiar with world-famous cupcake chef GUSTAVO MUSTACHIO!





INVESTIGATORS! Your assignment is to go undercover at **Batter Down**, the bakery owned by this man: world-famous cupcake chef **Gustavo Mustachio**.



AH-HA! I was right!



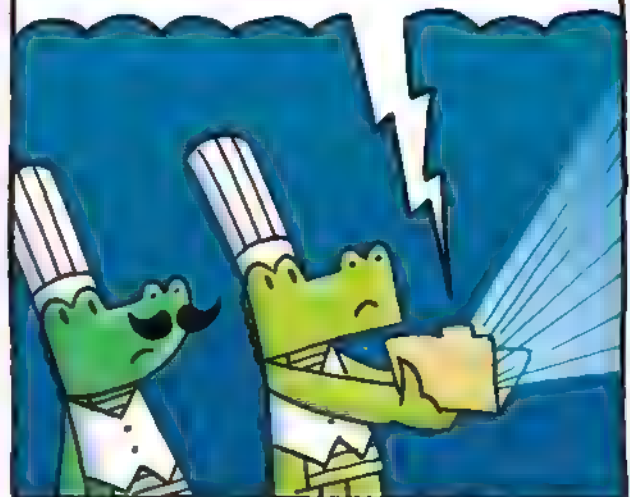
You might also recognize him from, like, every pizza box ever.



AH-HA! I was **ALSO** right!



QUIET, you two! Chef Gustavo has gone **MISSING!**



Mustachio hasn't been seen in **TWO WEEKS!** We suspect foul play. Batter Down was about to unveil his latest culinary masterpiece.



Someone must be after his secret recipes!



Or maybe some nefarious villain needs an expert baker and/or mustache model.



Hey, anything's possible.

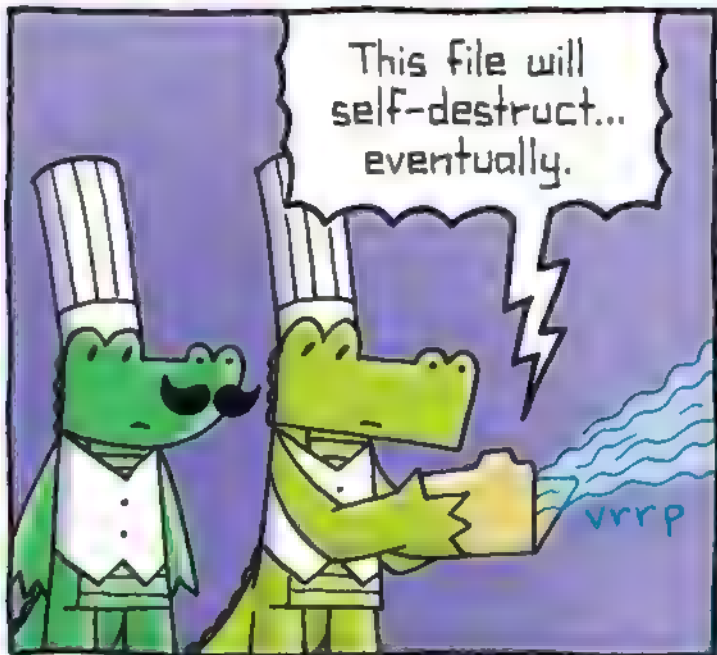




Your mission, Mango and Brash, is to find out what happened to Chef Gustavo and make sure his secret recipes are safe!



Don't worry, we're on the case!



This file will self-destruct... eventually.



I'm not getting on the case again.



You yelled at me last time.

Two weeks earlier...



What happened?
Where am I?



One minute I'm waxing my
handlebar mustache...

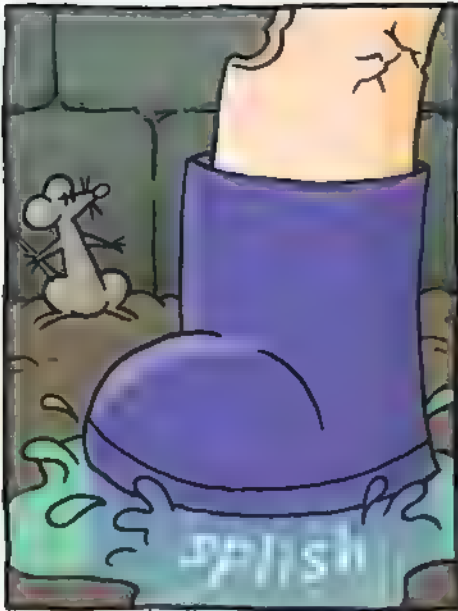


...the next, I'm behind bars!

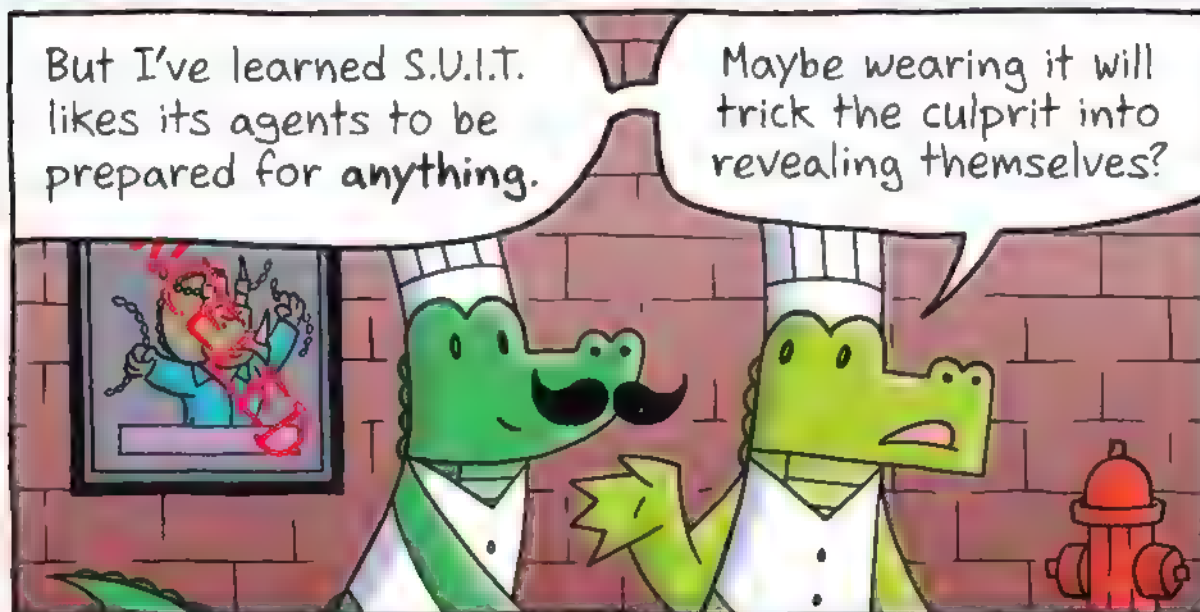


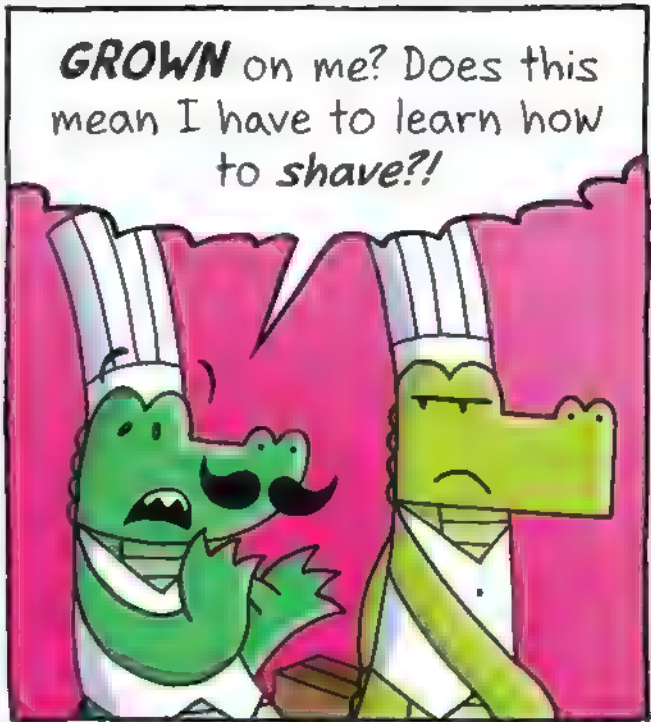
Hello? Anyone
there?





Chapter 2









I'd recognize that bushy mustache anywhere.



The tail is new, though.



Um... I...I had some work done?

That explains it! Silly me.

whew!



You, on the other hand, are obviously an alligator in a chef outfit.

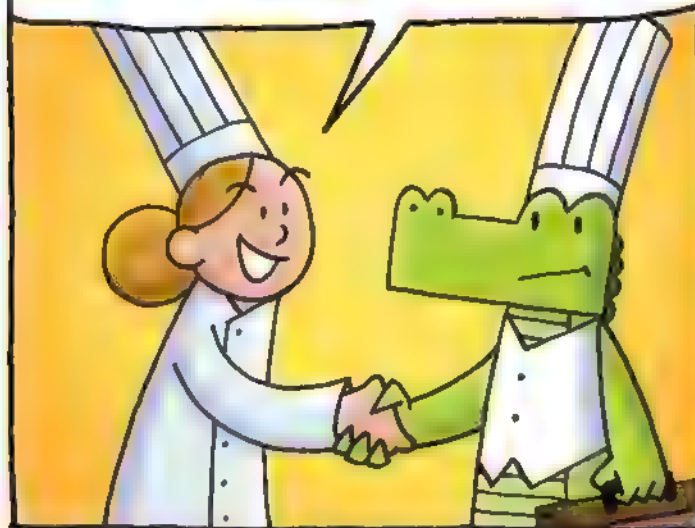


I'm...from accounting.

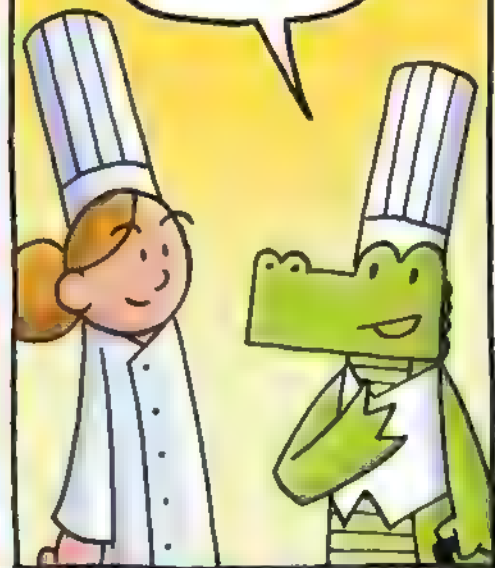
Huh. I thought everyone in accounting was a **SHARK**.



Oh well! What do I know? I'm Junior Assistant Baker Marie.

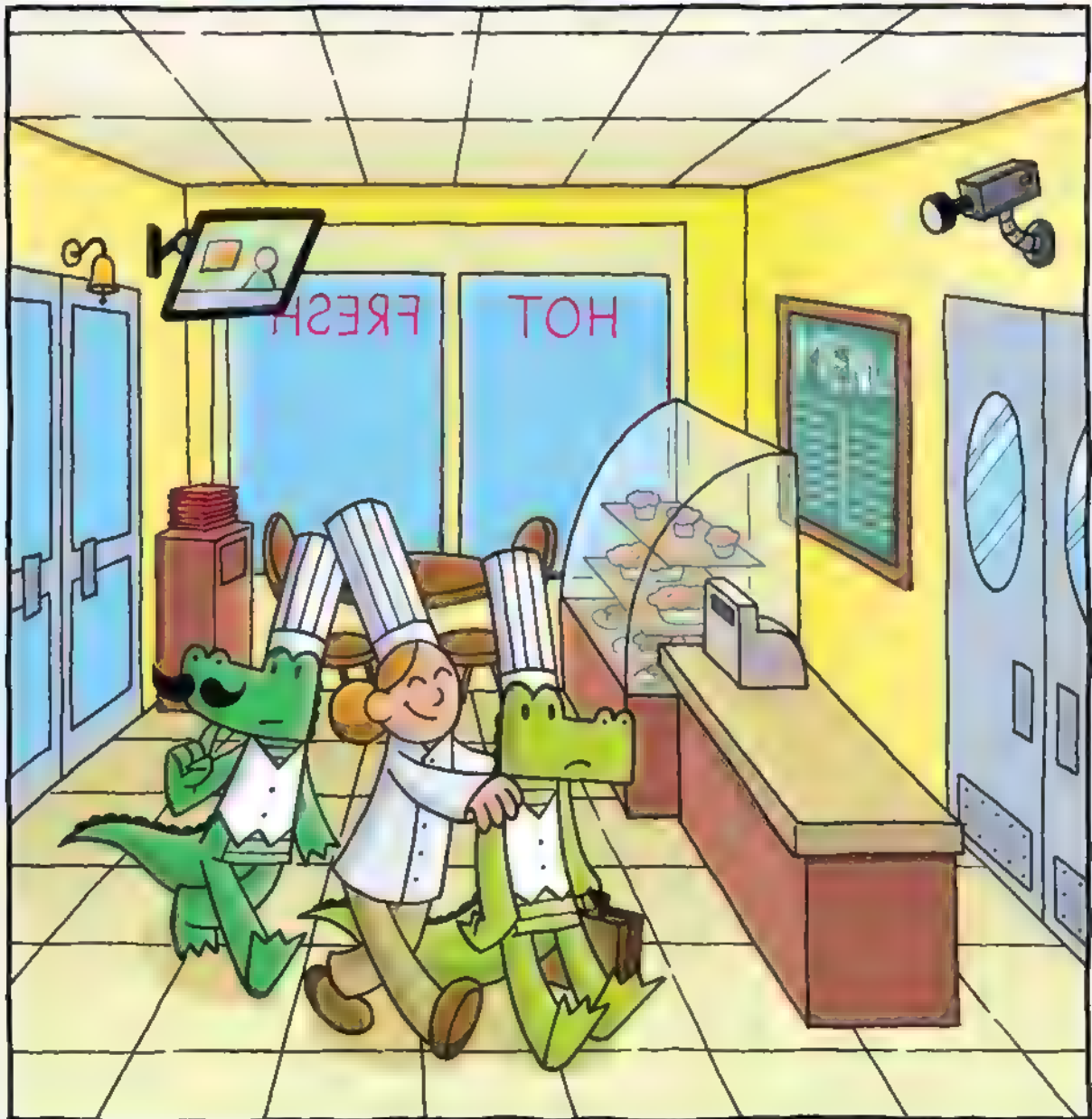


I'm Brash.

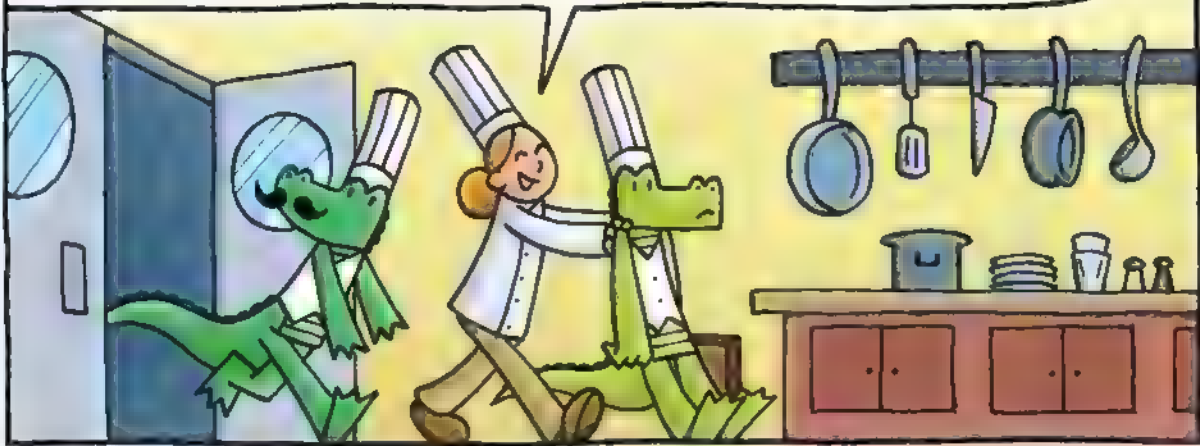


Ooh, is that the secret recipe for your latest culinary masterpiece, Gustavo?

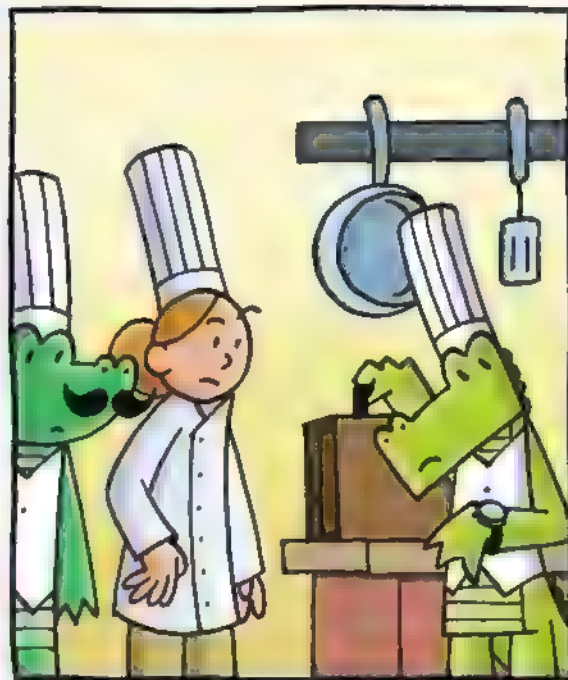




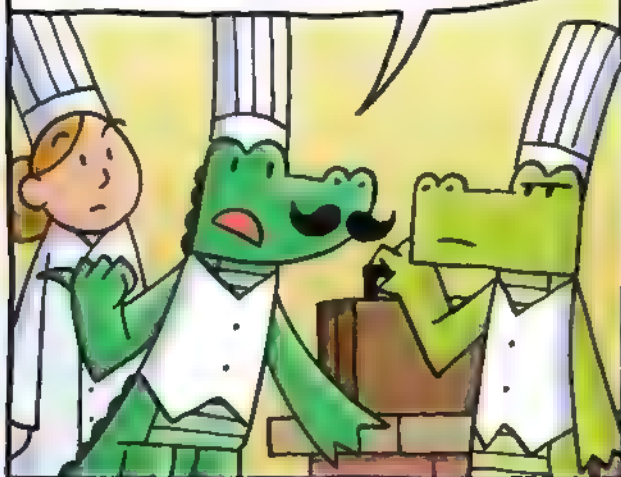
Right through here, to the Batter Down kitchen!



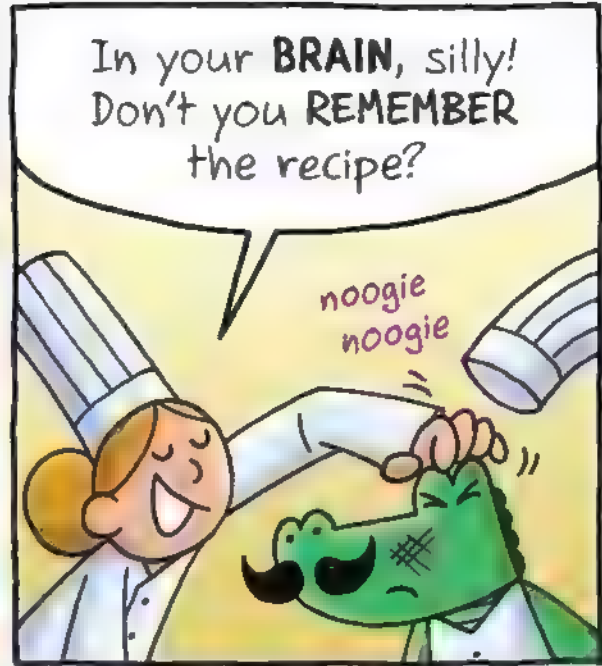
And now, if you'll get out the recipe, I can assemble the ingredients with the chef's permission.



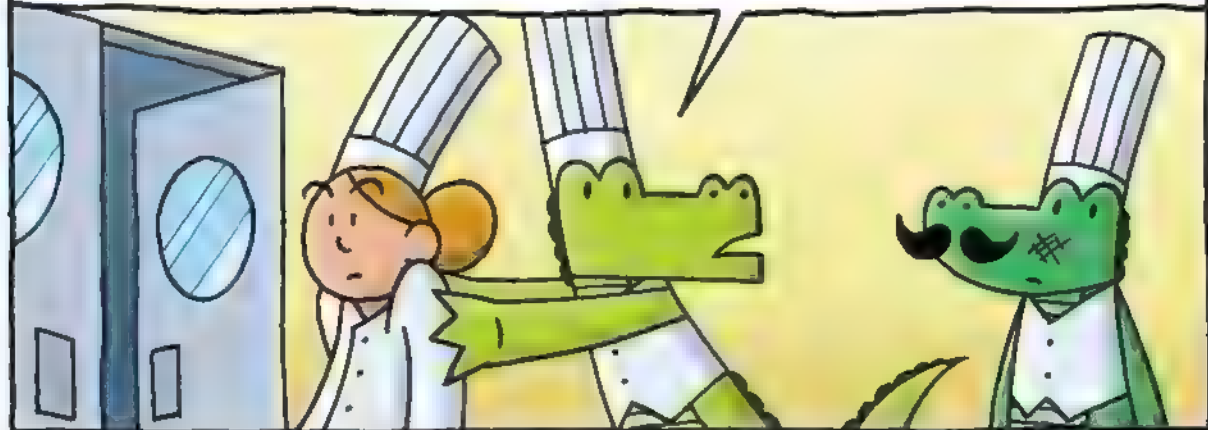
You heard Junior Assistant Baker Marie. Hand over the recipe!



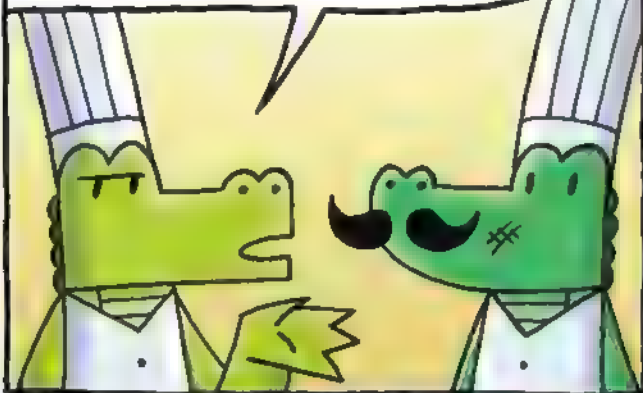




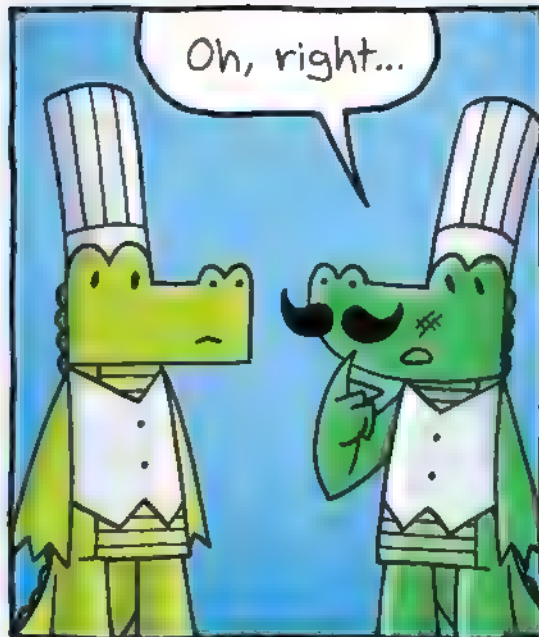
Yes! How right you are, Junior Assistant Baker Marie. Now, leave Chef Gustavo alone so the maestro can find his muse. I'll stay here for, um...legal purposes.



Mango, we're here to find out what happened to the **REAL** Gustavo, remember? You're **NOT** Gustavo!



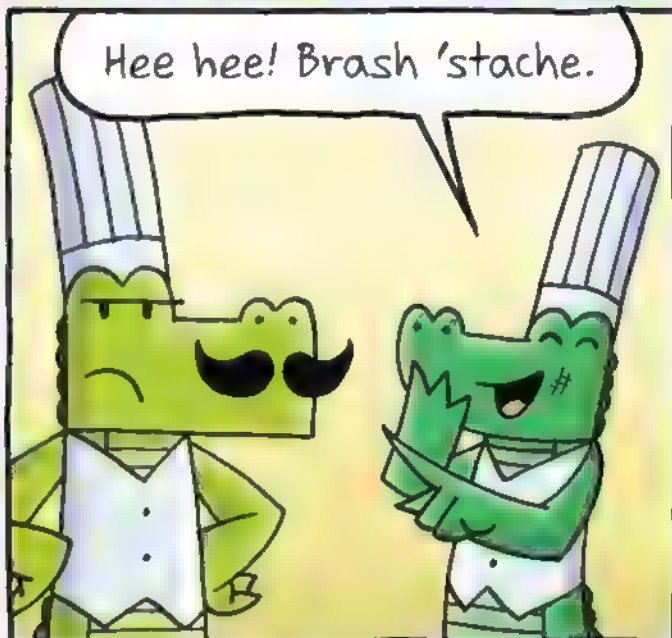
Oh, right...



TAG! YOU'RE GUSTAVO!



Hee hee! Brash 'stache.



This is serious, Mango. Now let's look for clues.



I do look pretty cool, though.

I heard that!



Sometime earlier, in a cool, dark place...

I h-h-have another
b-b-batch ready...



Hmm...



...NO...



...WEAK! This
is no good!



That's just the way
the cookie crumbles!



You're no baker!
You're a **FOOL!**





It's not me! It's these ingredients!

This flour is no good. And this butter is salted. I need unsalted. **UNsalted!**



Say that word again and it's **YOU** who will be assaulted!

I want that super dough!

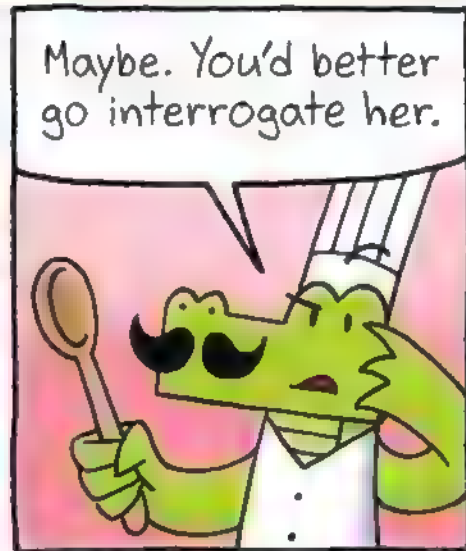


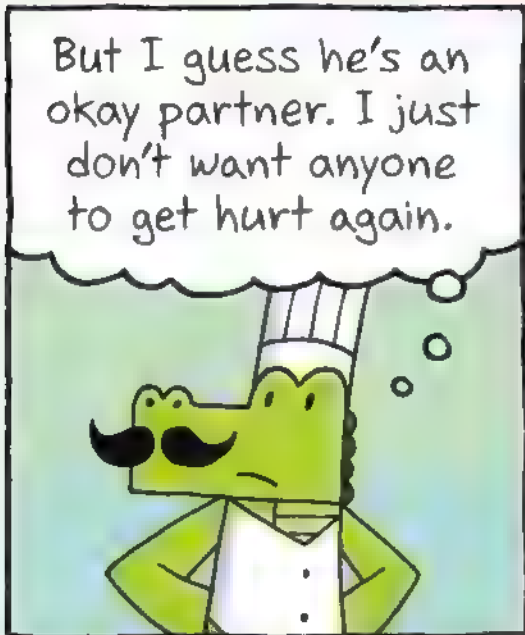
Please, I can fix! I just need better supplies!

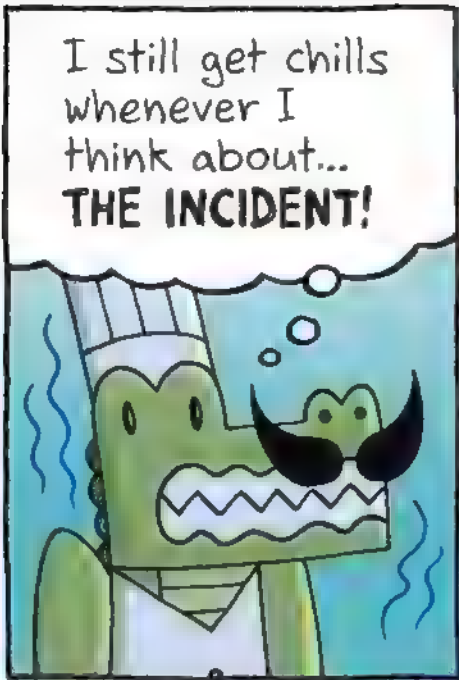


FINE! I'll get you what you need. But don't fail me again, Mustachio!

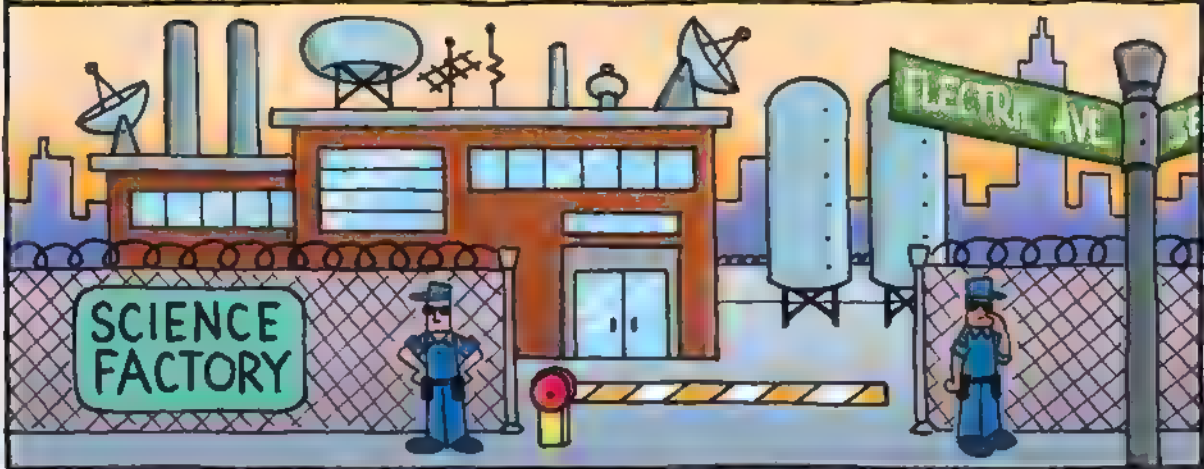
Chapter 3





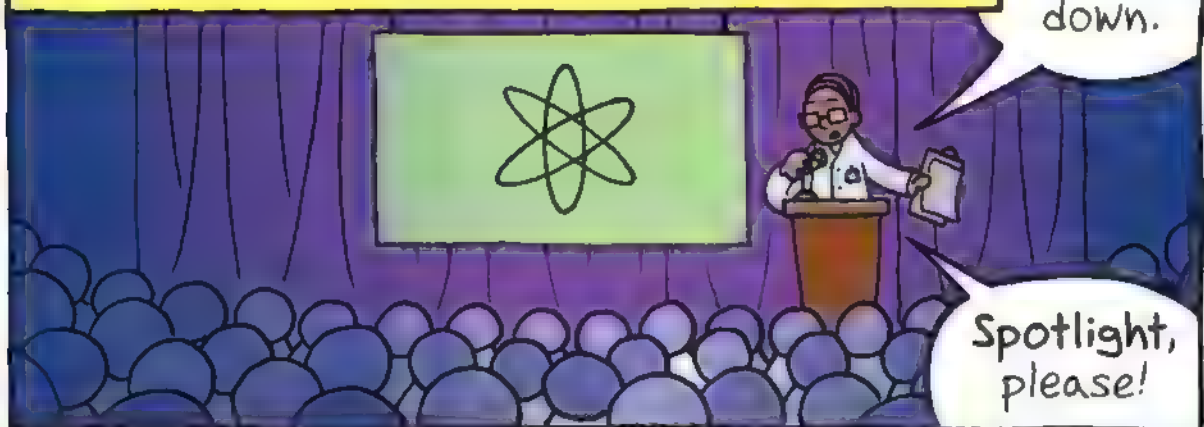


Meanwhile, across town, something totally unrelated is going down at the Science Factory!



Inside, where all the science is made, the Head Scientist is about to reveal their latest scientific breakthrough to the world!

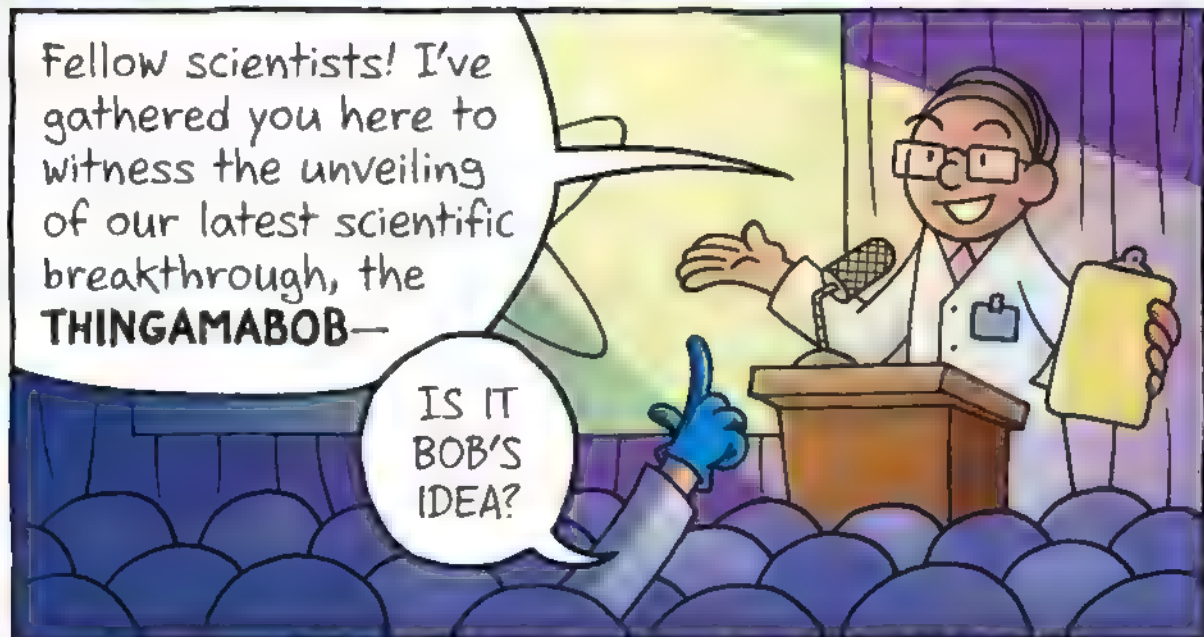
Okay, okay, settle down.

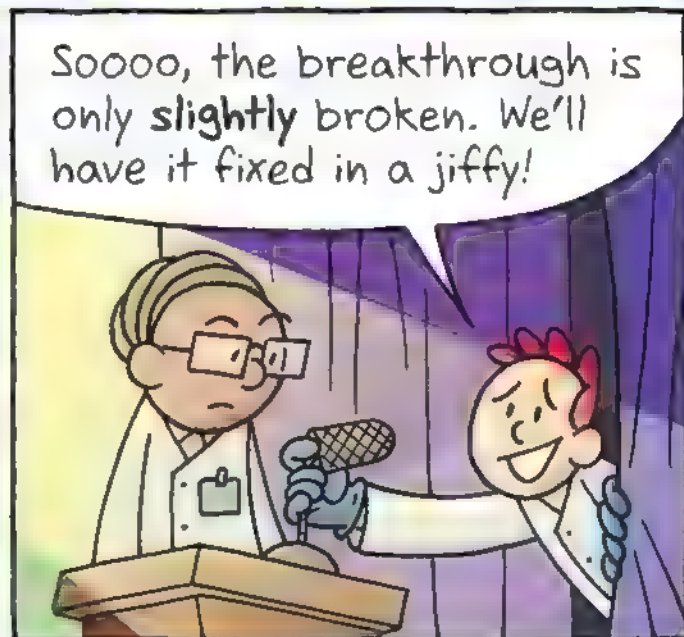
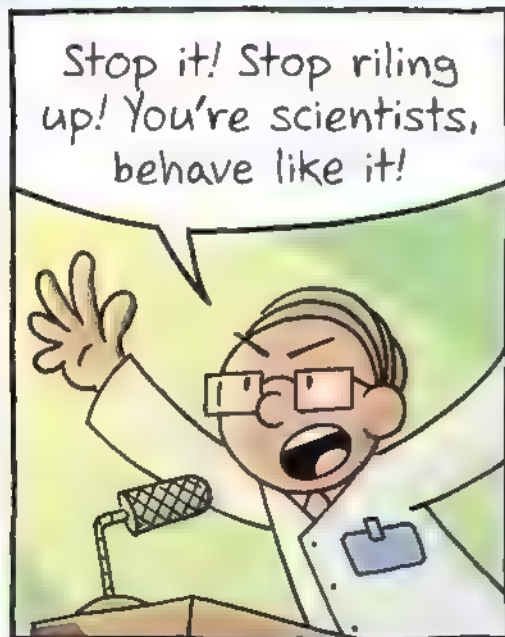
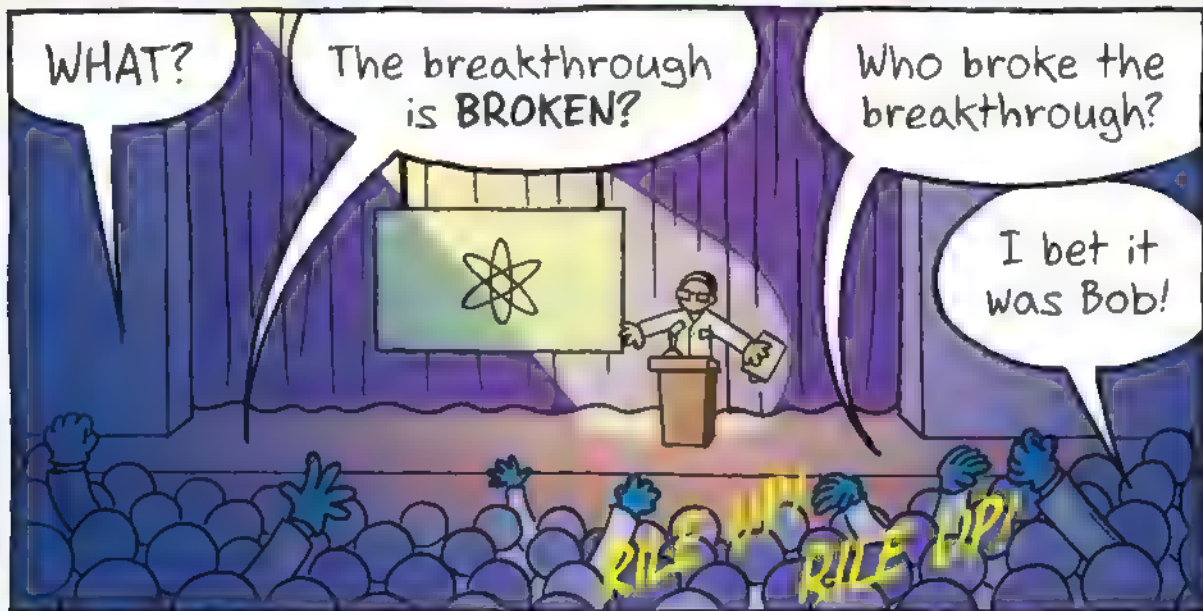
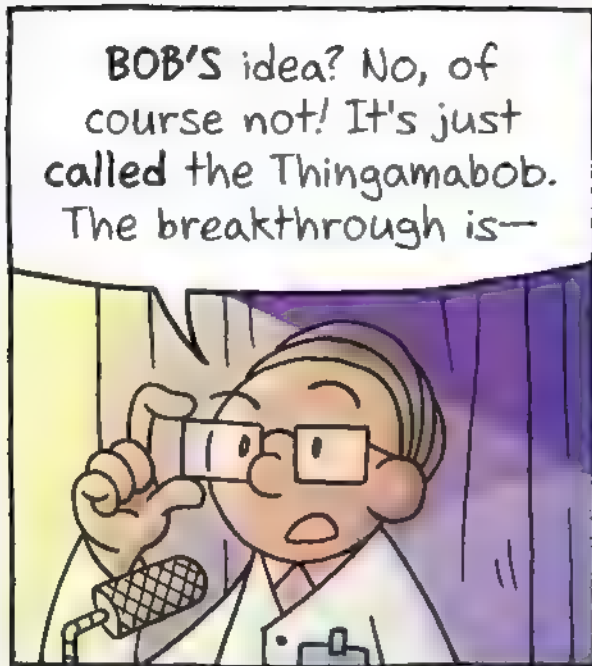


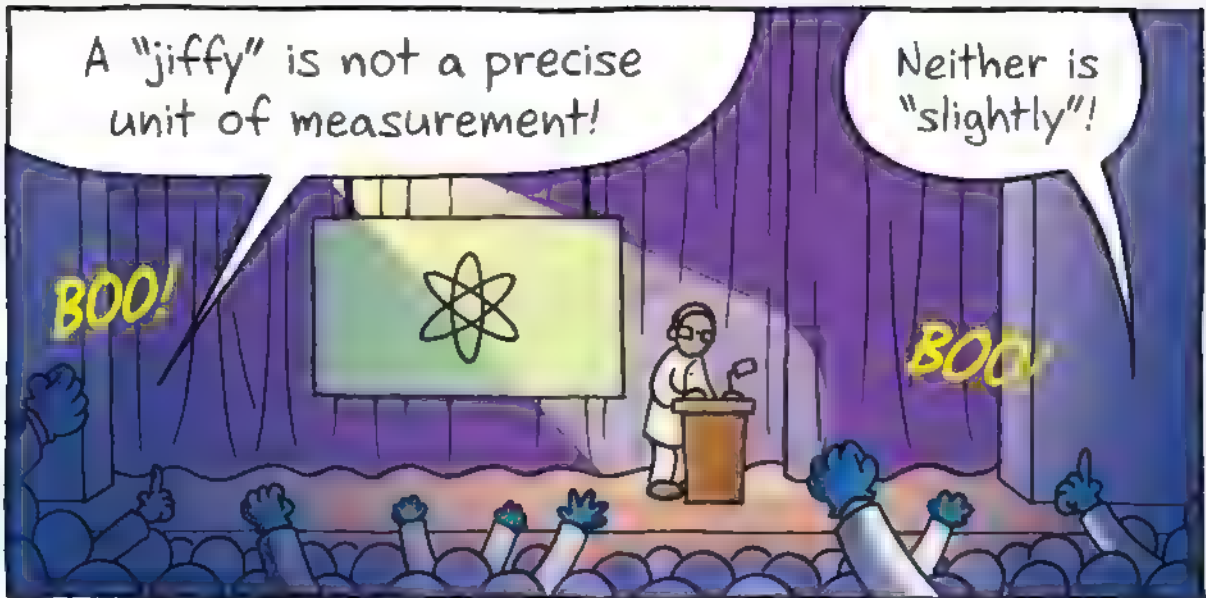
Spotlight, please!

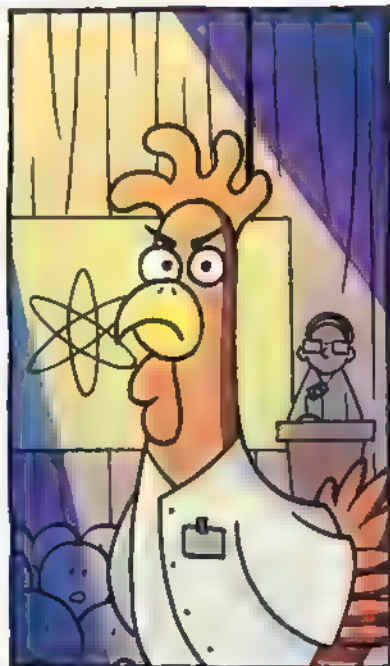
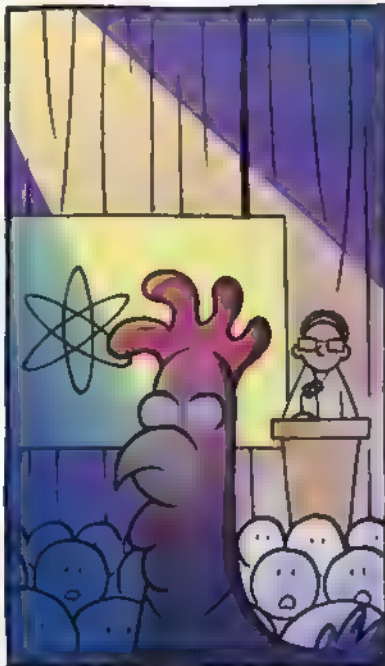
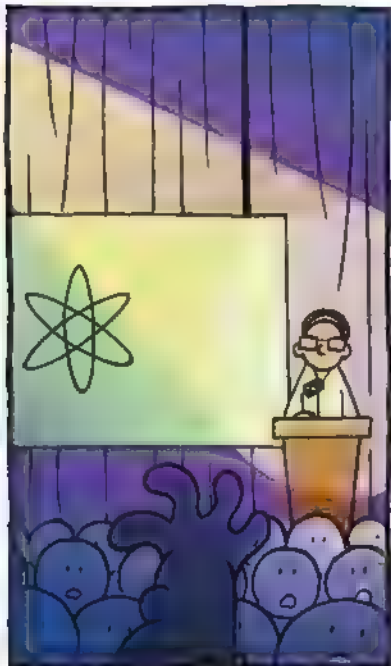
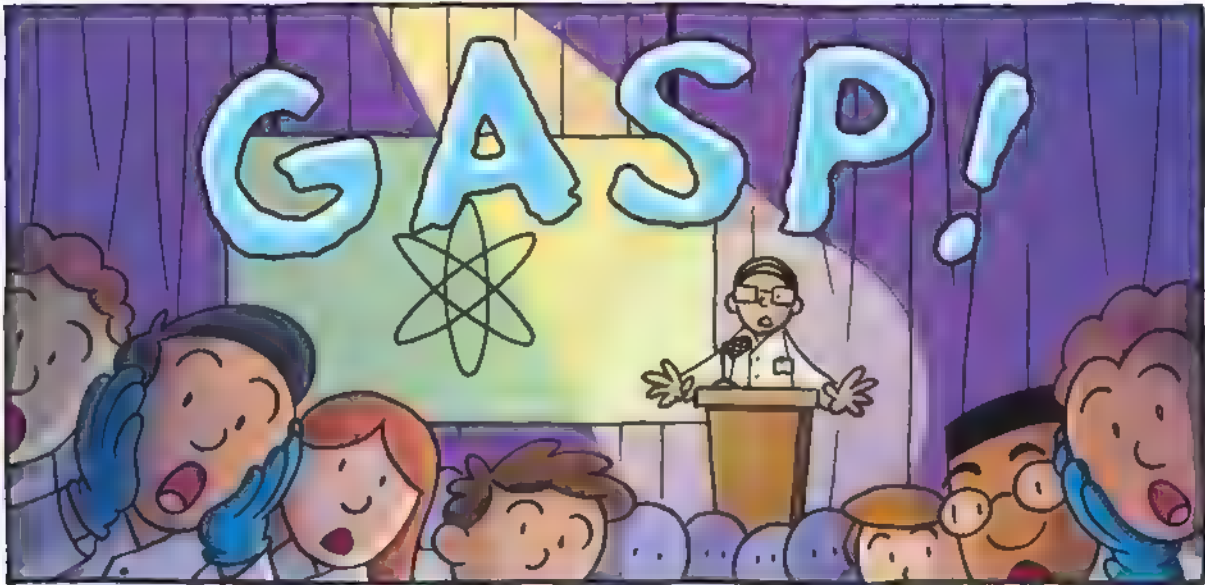
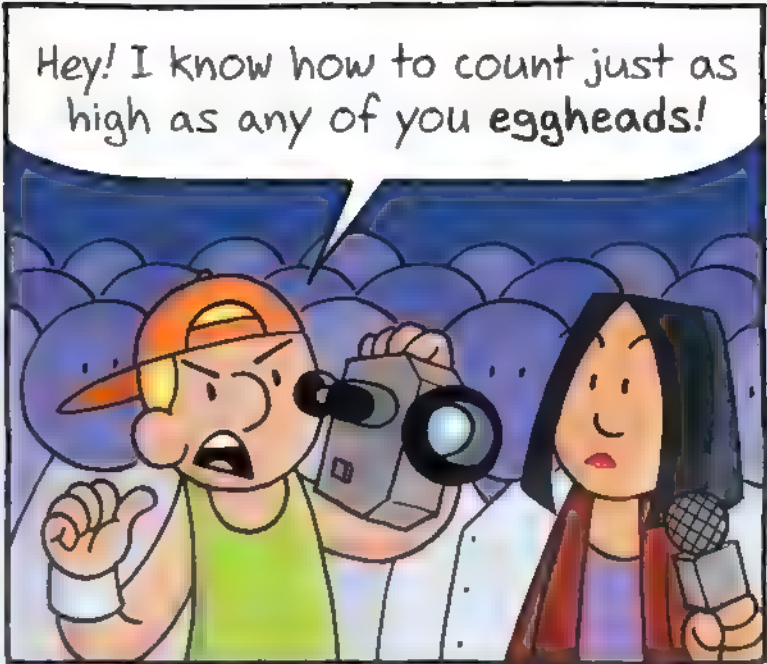
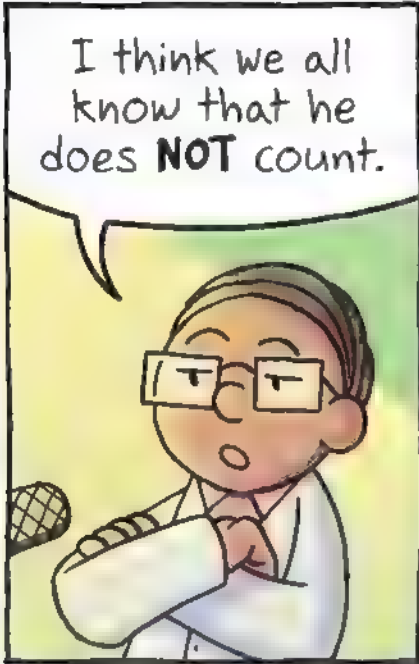
Fellow scientists! I've gathered you here to witness the unveiling of our latest scientific breakthrough, the **THINGAMABOB**—

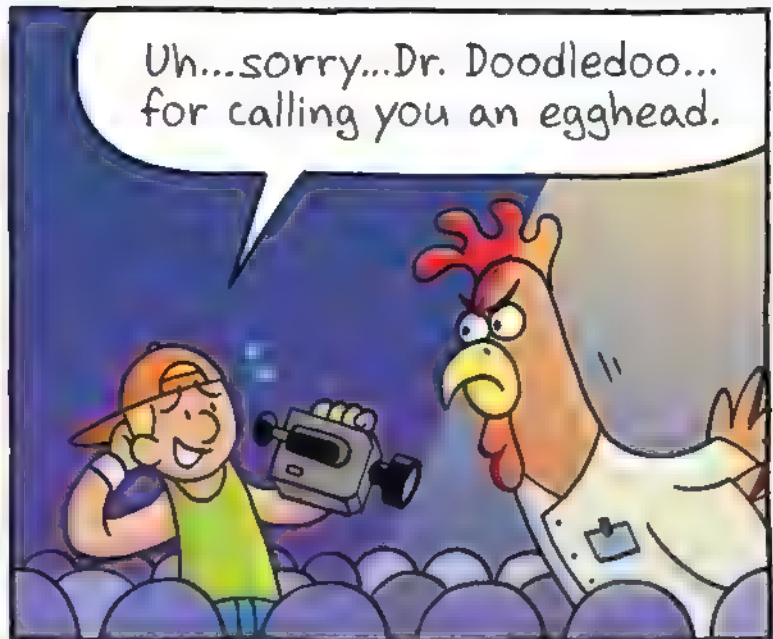
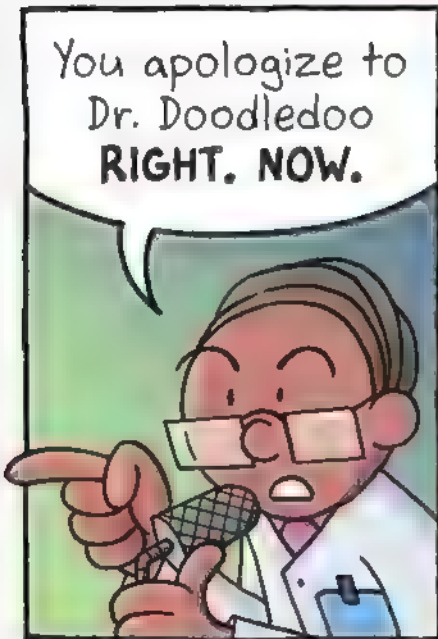
IS IT BOB'S IDEA?

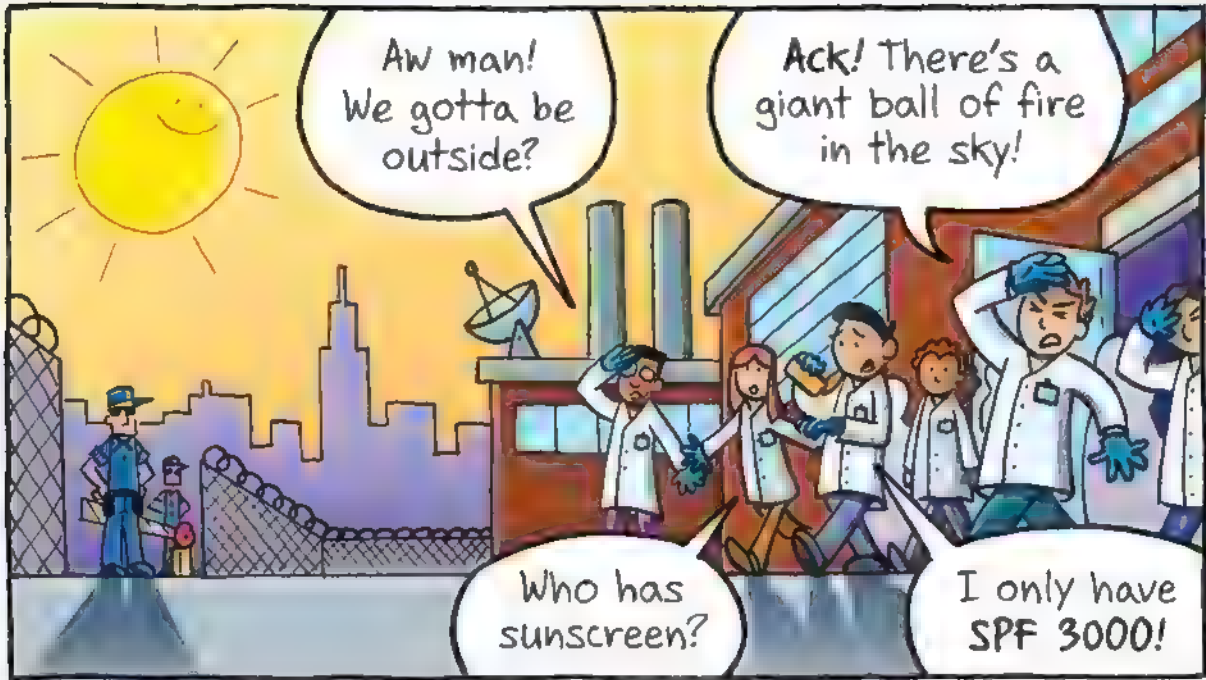


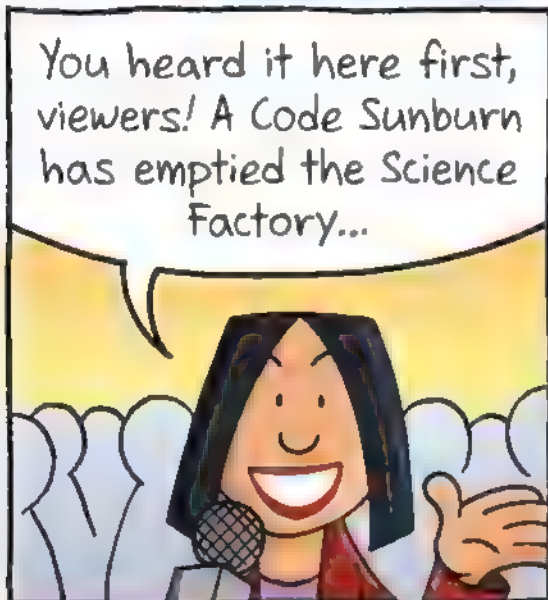
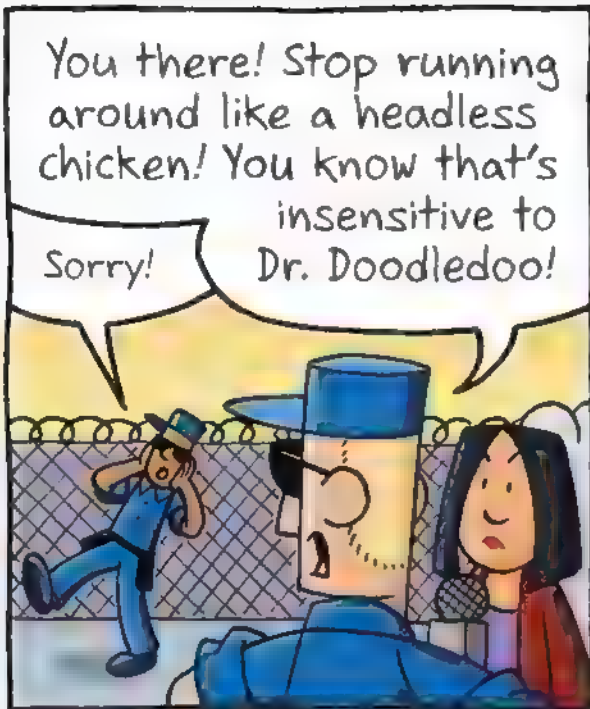












Chapter 4





Oh! The Mango Mustache!



That's one of our top-selling fruit-filled croissants.



Don't you wish you could come up with such amazing recipes, Mister Brash?

nom
nom



Brath ith hith firtht name. Wait—latht name?



Your name is "Brash Brash"?

I'm Mango.

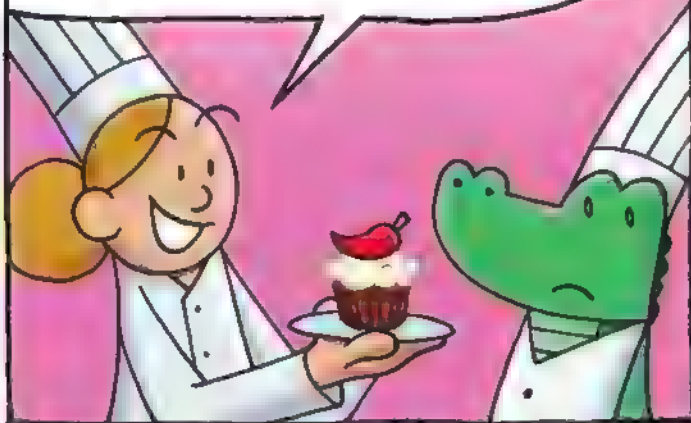


NO, WAIT! HE'S Mango. NO! He's GUSTAVO! Because he has the MUSTACHE! I'M Brash!

Now, then! when I, Brash—NO, Gustavo Brashstachio—NO, GUSTAVO MUSTACHIO—went missing for two weeks, did you, Marie, think to alert anyone?



Oh, the Red Alert! That's our red velvet cupcake topped with a jalapeño pepper.



It's like a five-alarm fire in your mouth!



Have a bite!



Aw, just one bite.



One. Little. Bite.





A customer! Saved by the bell!



Welcome to Batter...Down?

What does that even mean?

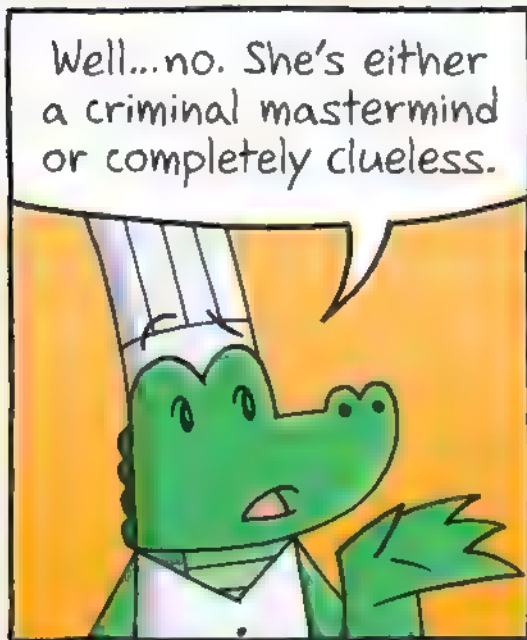


I have a special order for a birthday cake.



Oh, a special order. Chef Gustavo will handle this personally.





The **BIG OVEN**
is missing!



Oh
no!

Right? Clearly its
disappearance must
have something to
do with Gustavo's
disappearance.



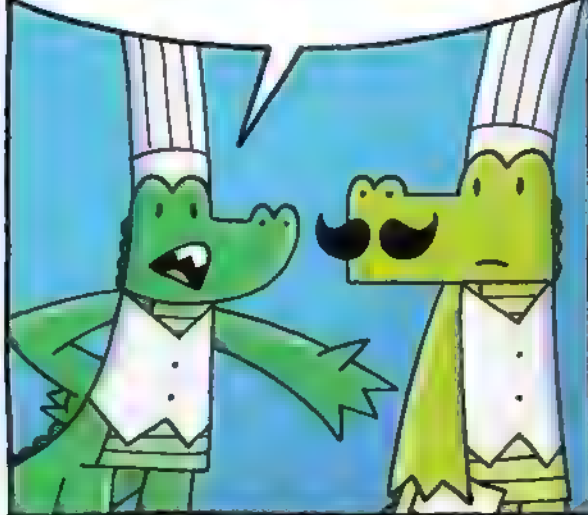
No, I mean, how
are we gonna bake
this cake now?!



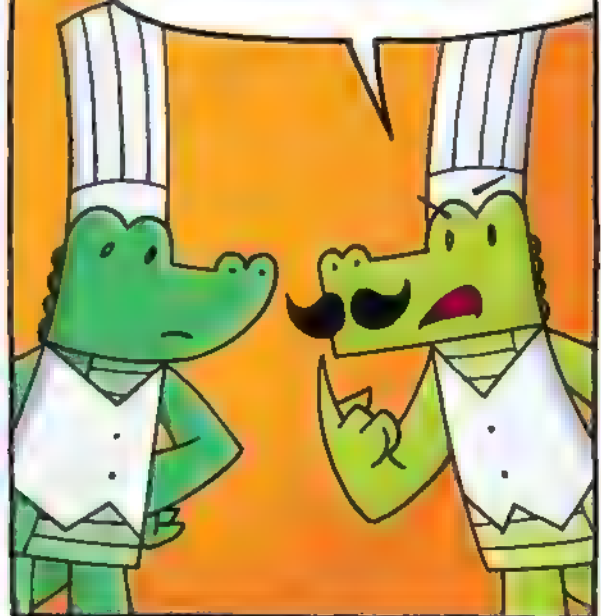
Oh, well, luckily we
can bake it in this
EVEN BIGGER OVEN!

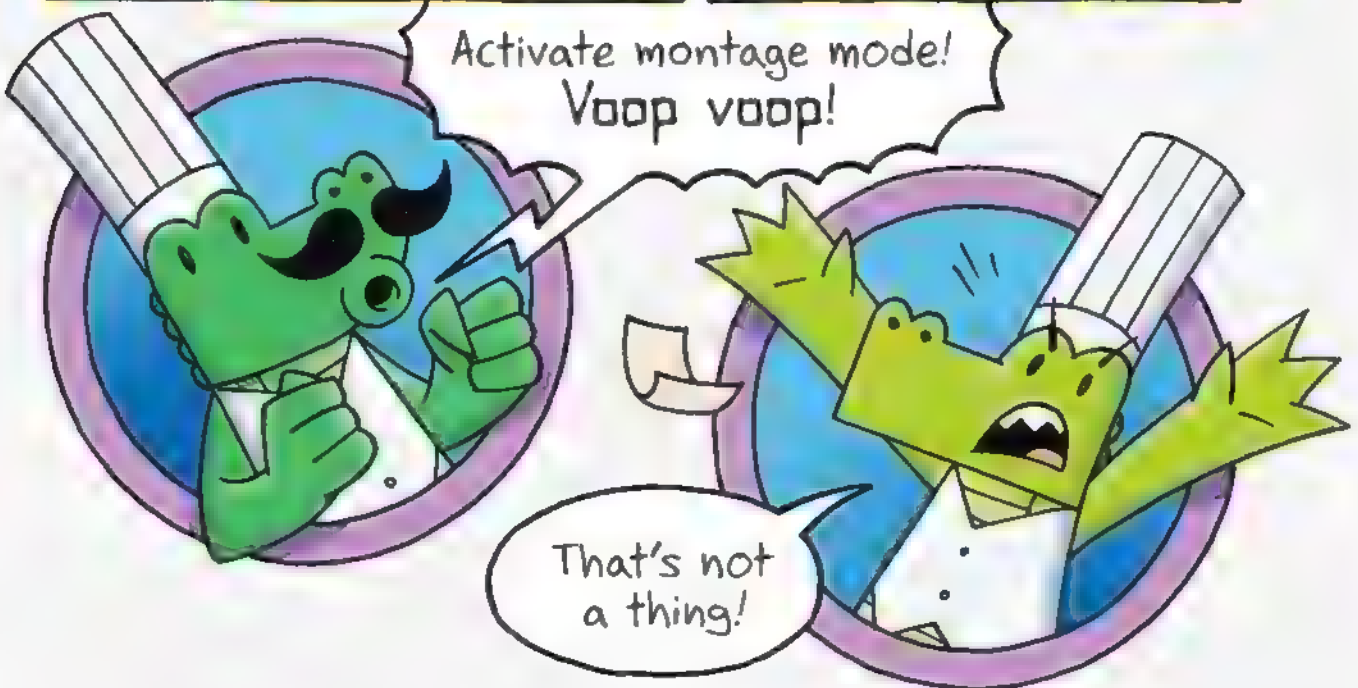


Doesn't that just mean
THAT'S the *big* oven and
the one that's missing
is the *medium* oven?

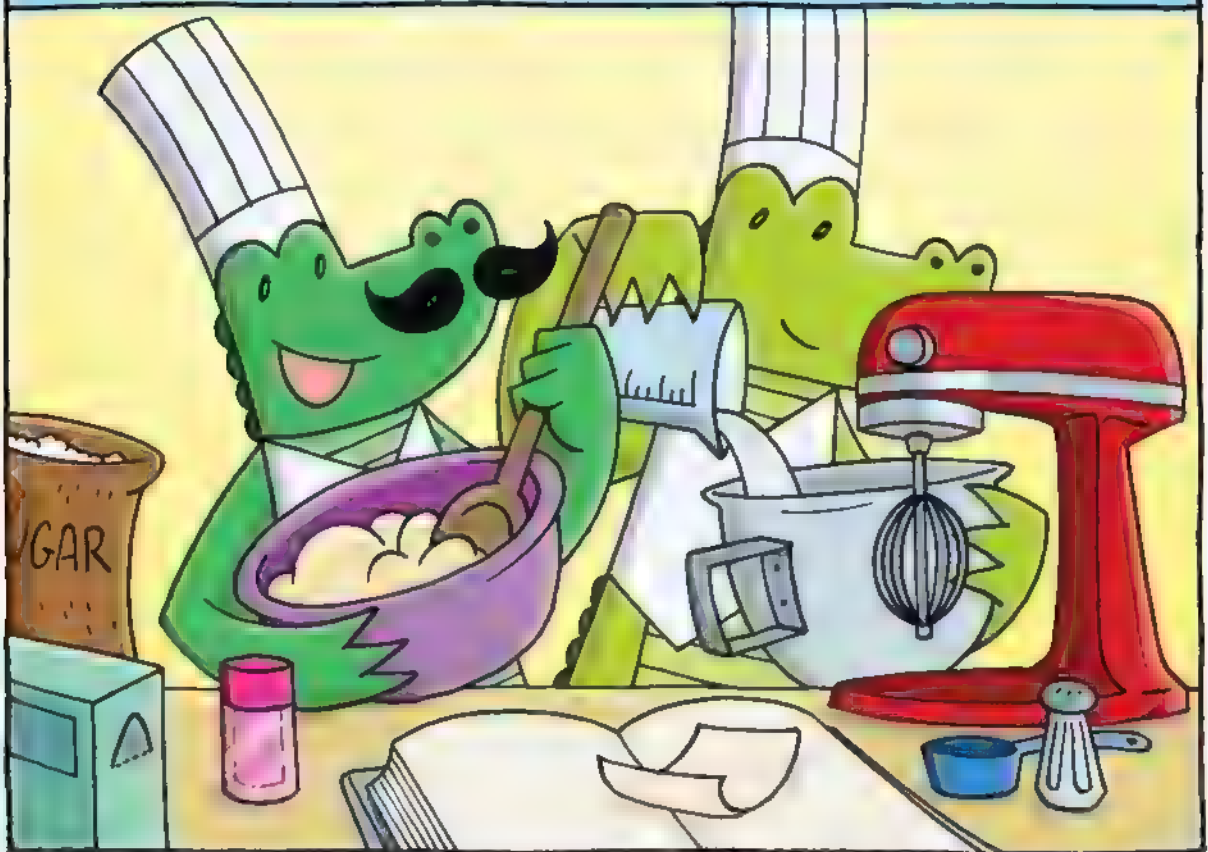


HEY, which one of us
is Chef Gustavo?





♪ ♪ Investigators, bakin' a cake! ♪ ♪



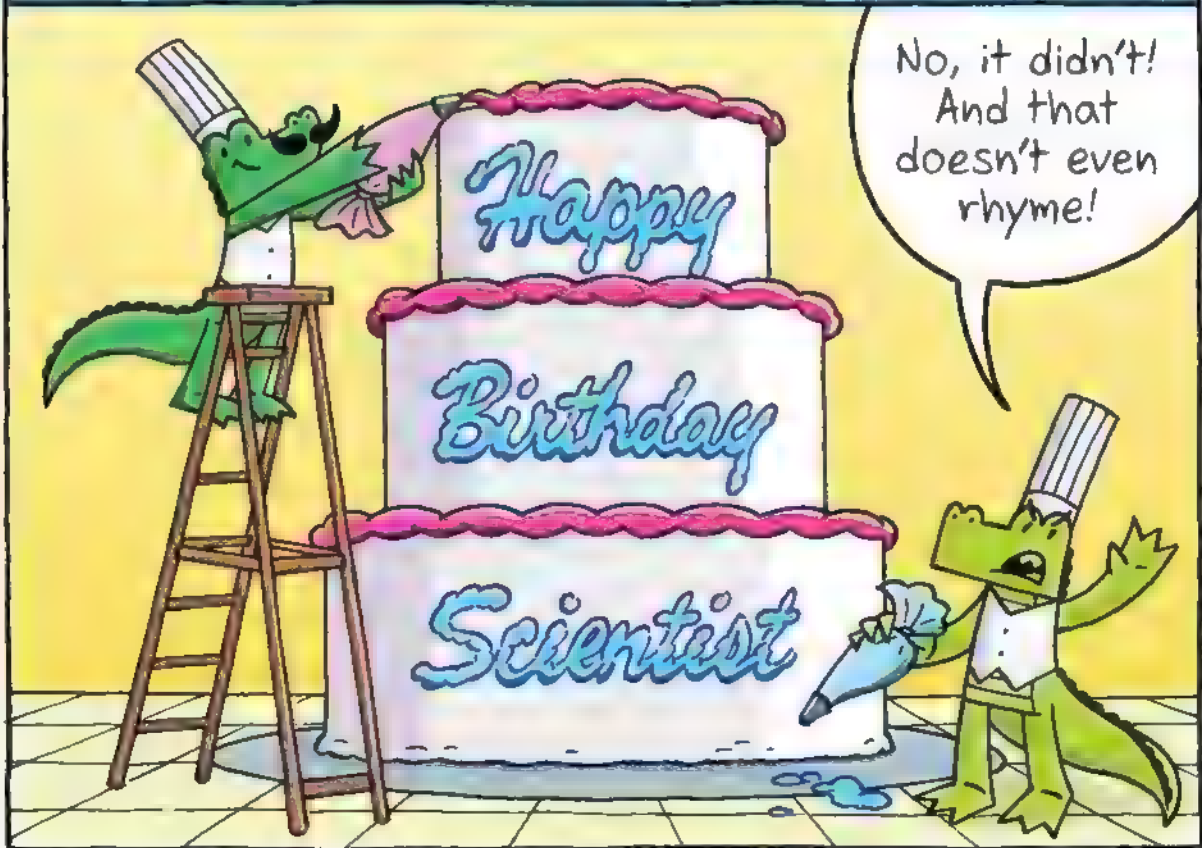
♪ Is it even a thing that they know how to make? ♪



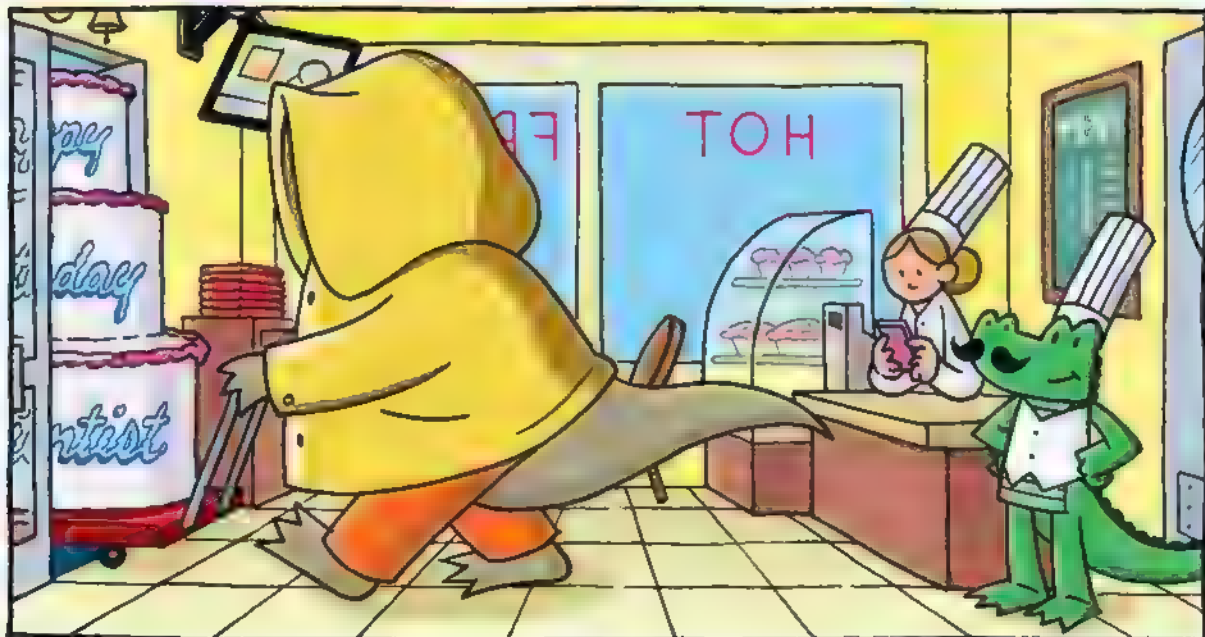
♪ They used eggs and flour and unsalted butter! ♪



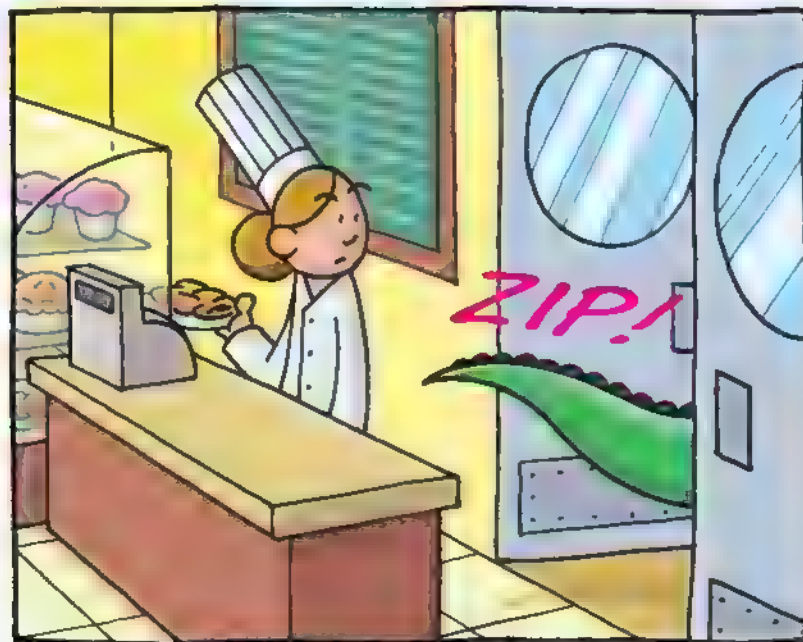
♪ And it took them an hour to spell "scientist"! ♪





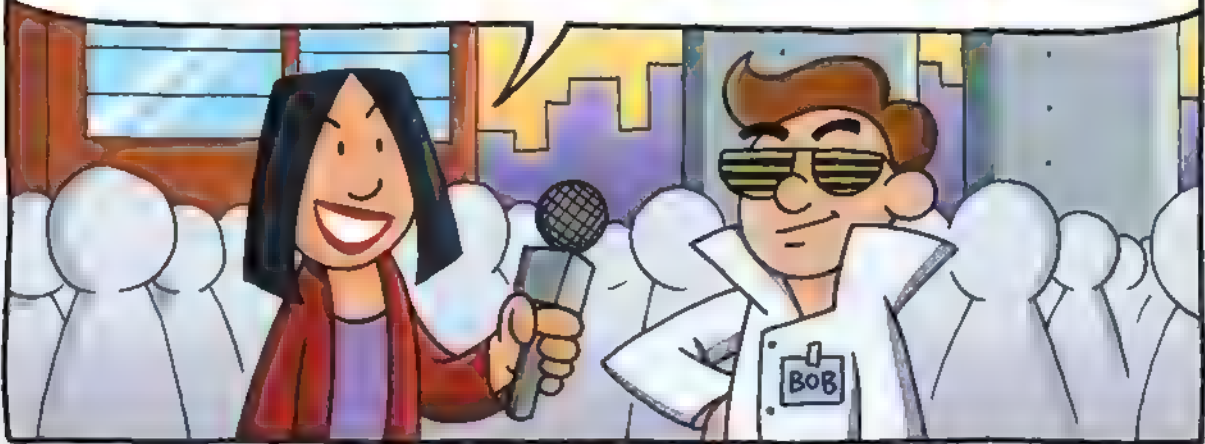




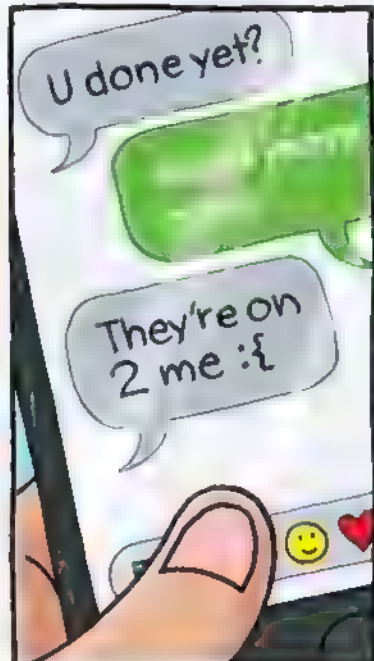
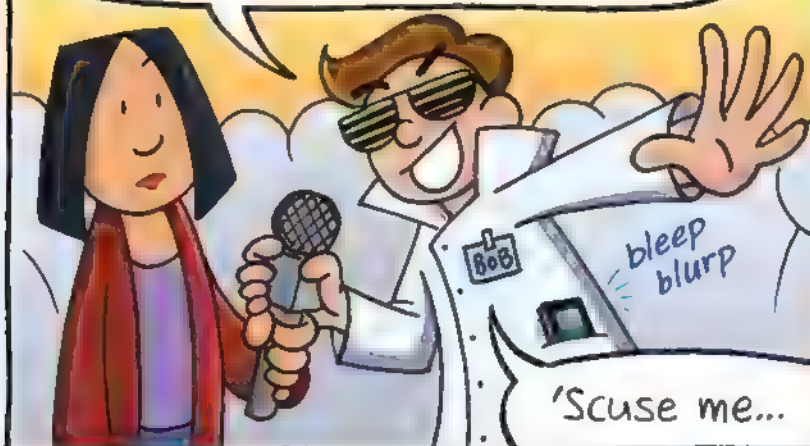


Chapter 5

Cici Boringstories here, reporting outside the Science Factory. With me is **SCIENTIST BOB**. Tell us, Bob, what's this scientific breakthrough you're cooking up inside?



Ha ha! I won't tell you what **I'M** cookin', Susan, but I will tell you it'll blow this breakthrough—



Sorry, Sophie. Scientist Bob's gotta motor!



Well, that wasn't informative at all. Soooooo let's check in with the *Action News Now* helicopter in the sky!



Way up high...

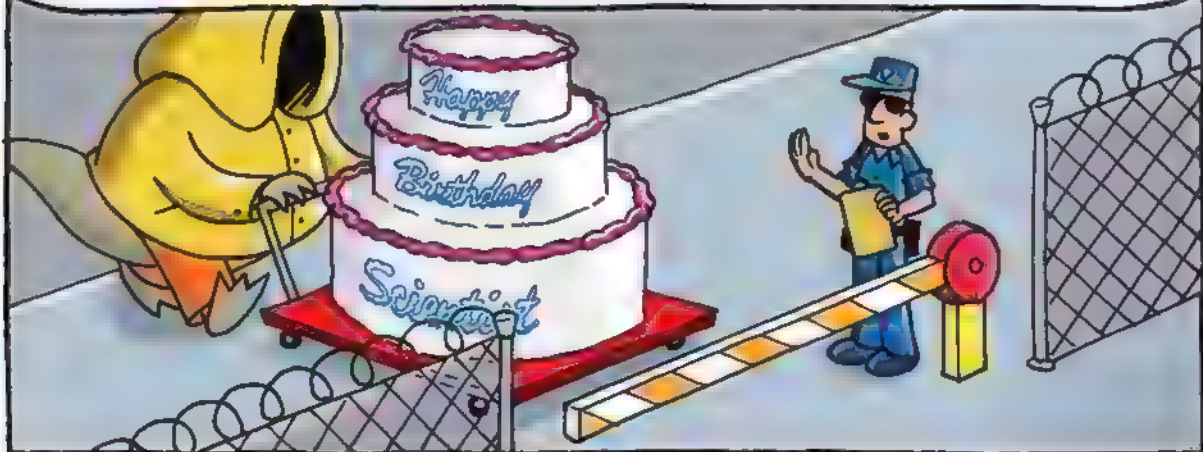
Yes, Cici, I am indeed in the sky,
and let me tell you...

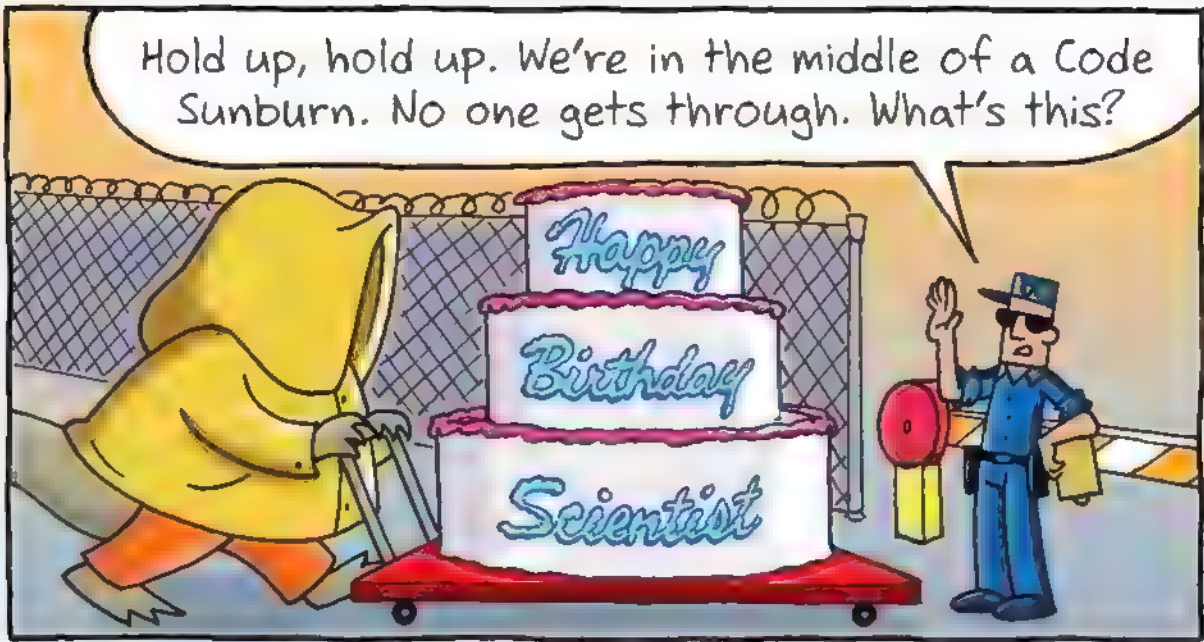
...NOTHING is
more exciting than
watching a crowd gather
for a press conference!

It looks so busy
down there!

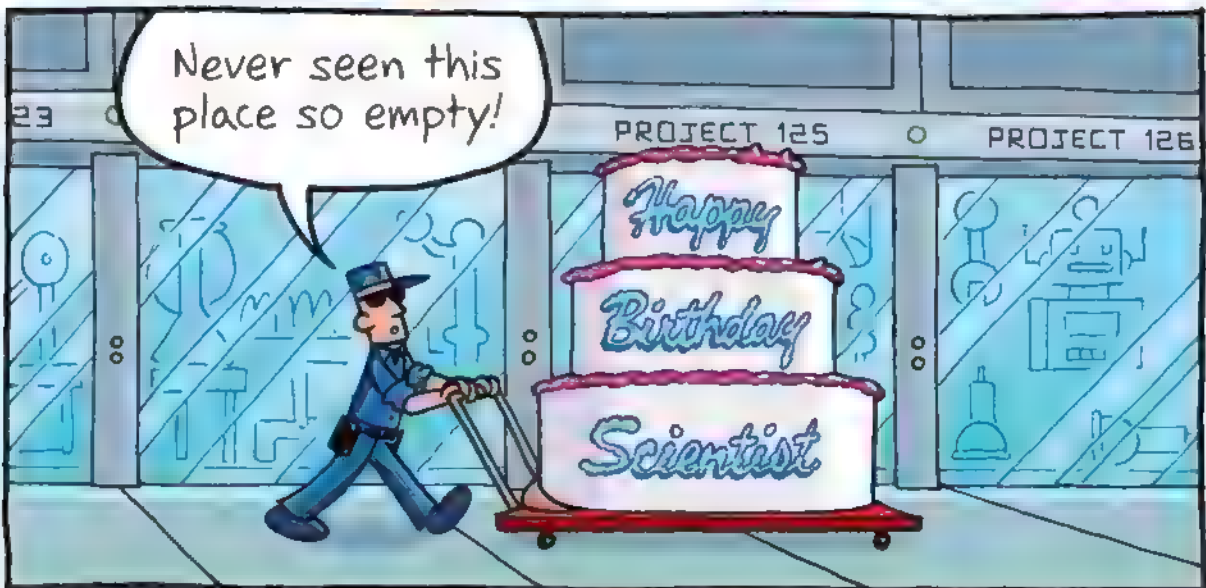
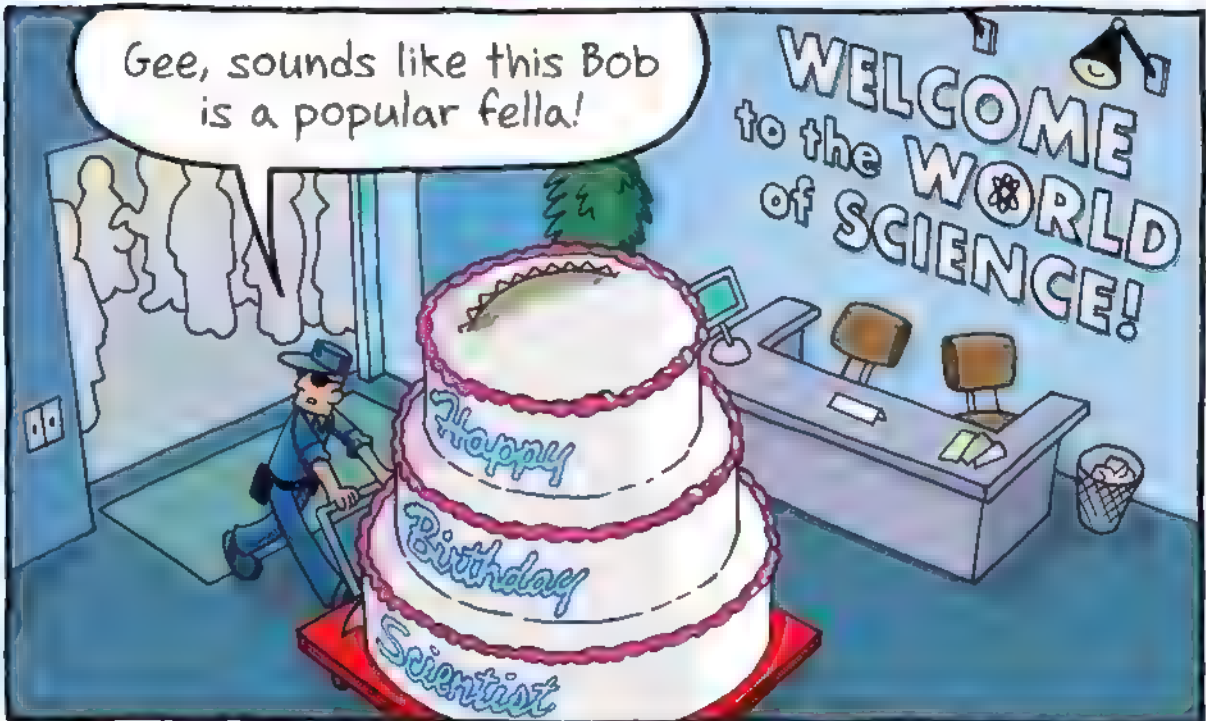
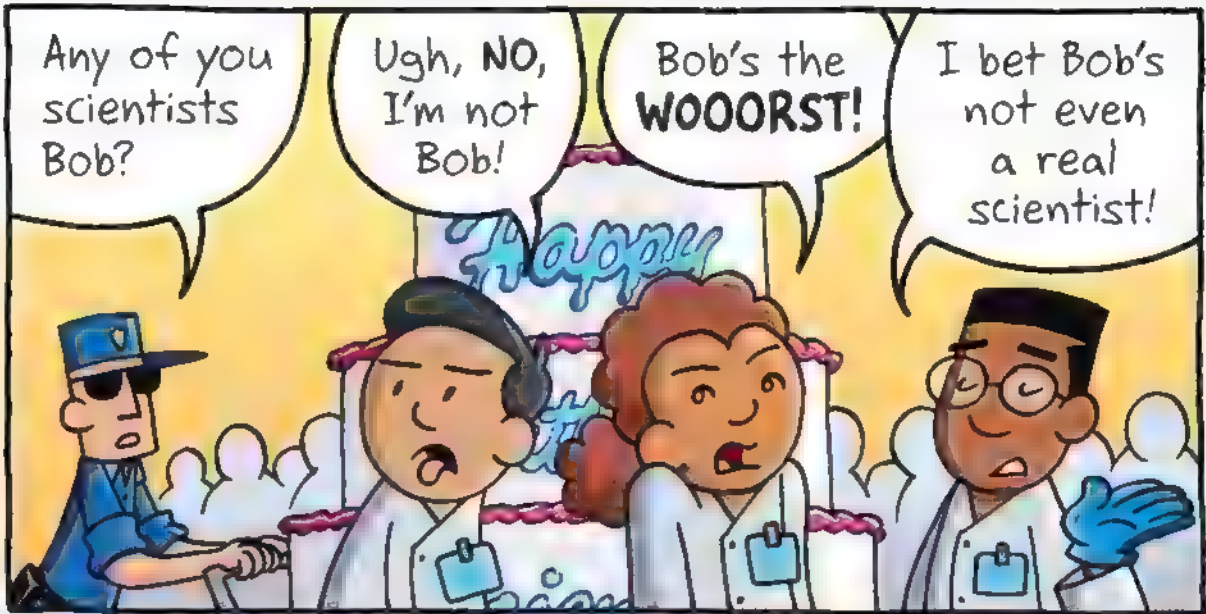
I'd be surprised
if nothing snuck
past security...

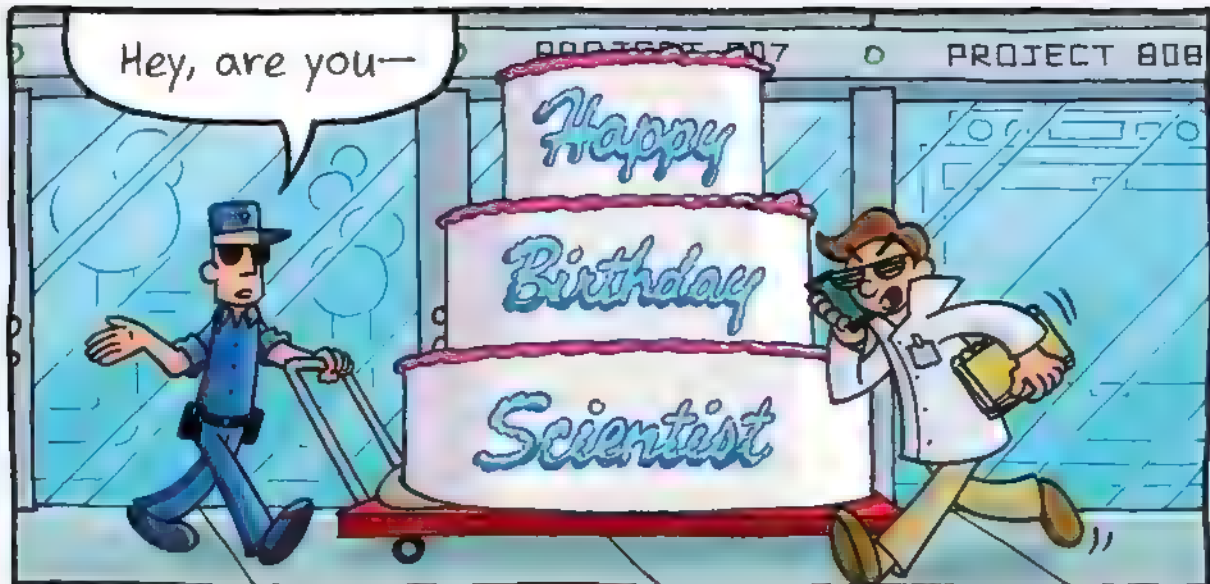
...and, well, Cici, that certainly would be newsworthy.











Hey, are you—



CAN'T YOU SEE I'M ON THE PHONE?!



SHEESH! Enjoy the party or whatever!



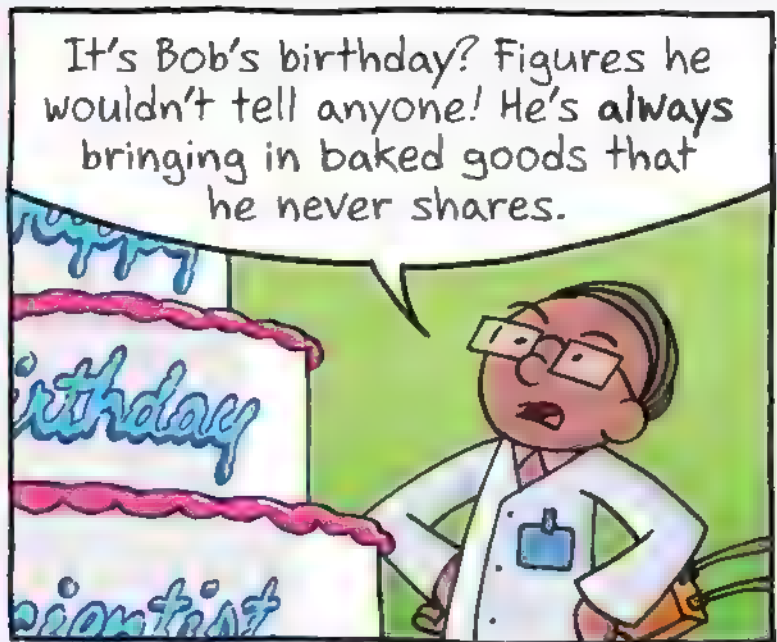
BUMP!



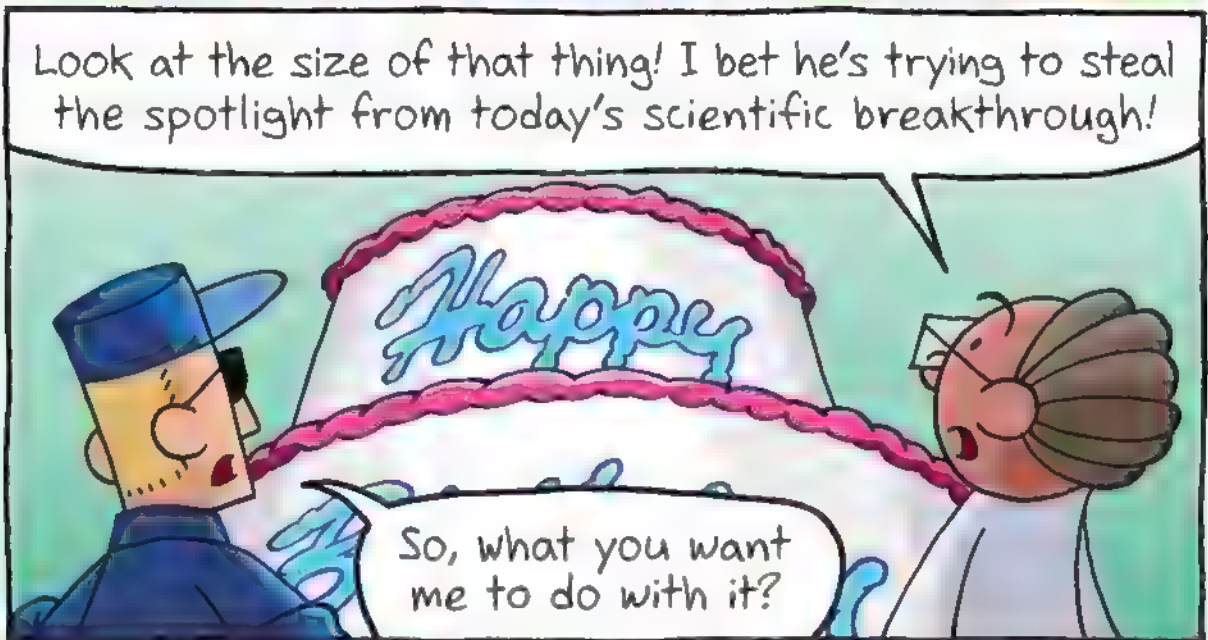
Huh? What's this?



Birthday cake for Bob.



It's Bob's birthday? Figures he wouldn't tell anyone! He's always bringing in baked goods that he never shares.



Look at the size of that thing! I bet he's trying to steal the spotlight from today's scientific breakthrough!

So, what you want me to do with it?



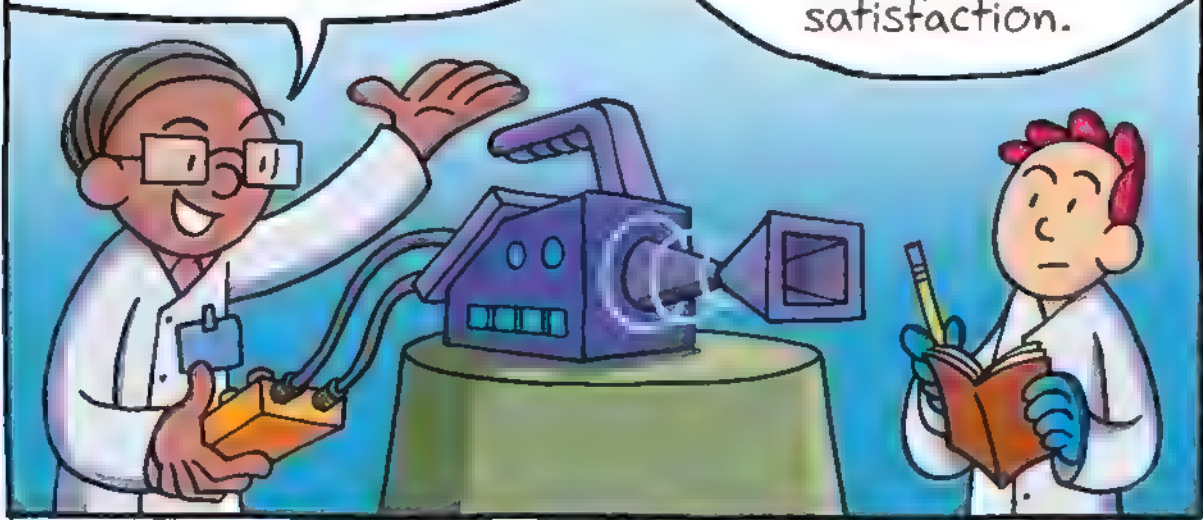
Eh, leave it here. I'll deal with it later.



And...there! All working again!

Soon the world will know the true nature of this, our **THINGAMABOB!**

Wait—I'm not calling it that anymore. I don't wanna give Bob the satisfaction.



How about... **THINGAMASTEVE?**

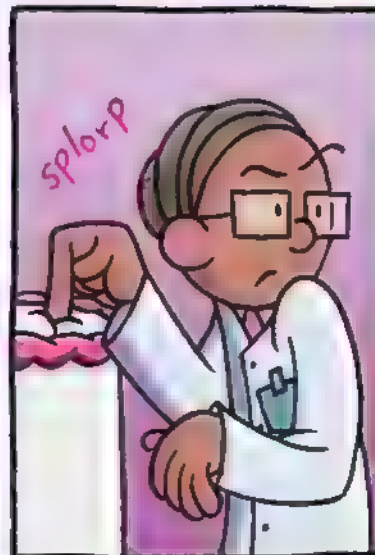


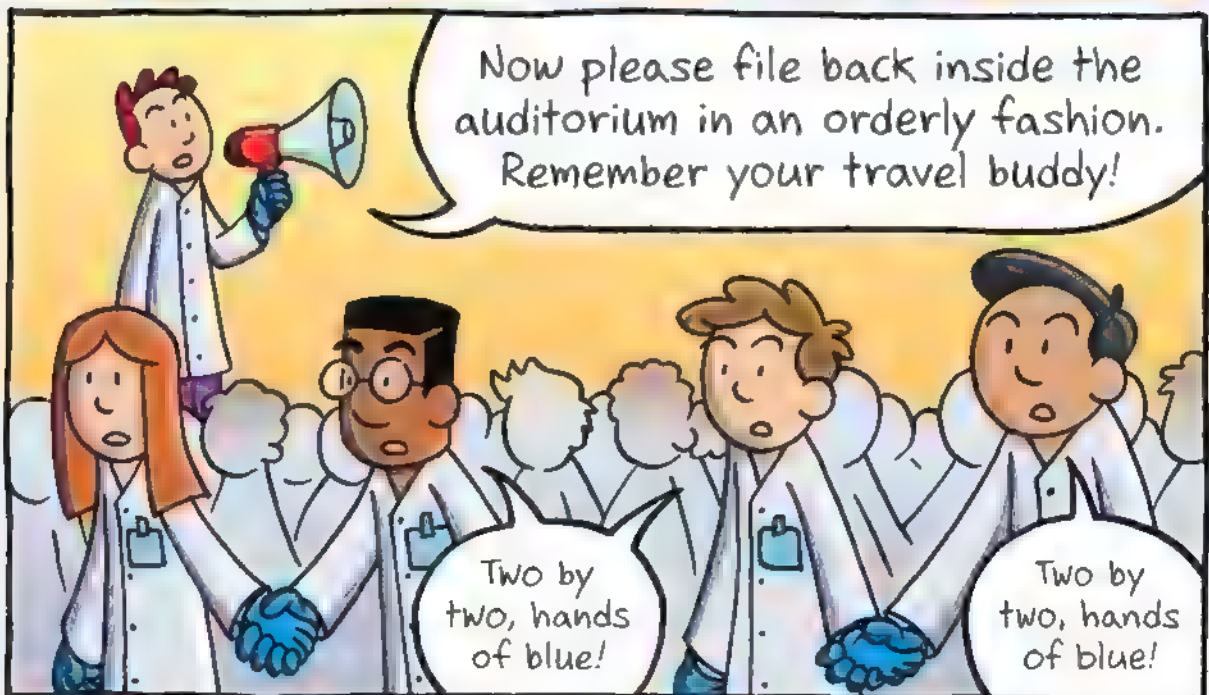
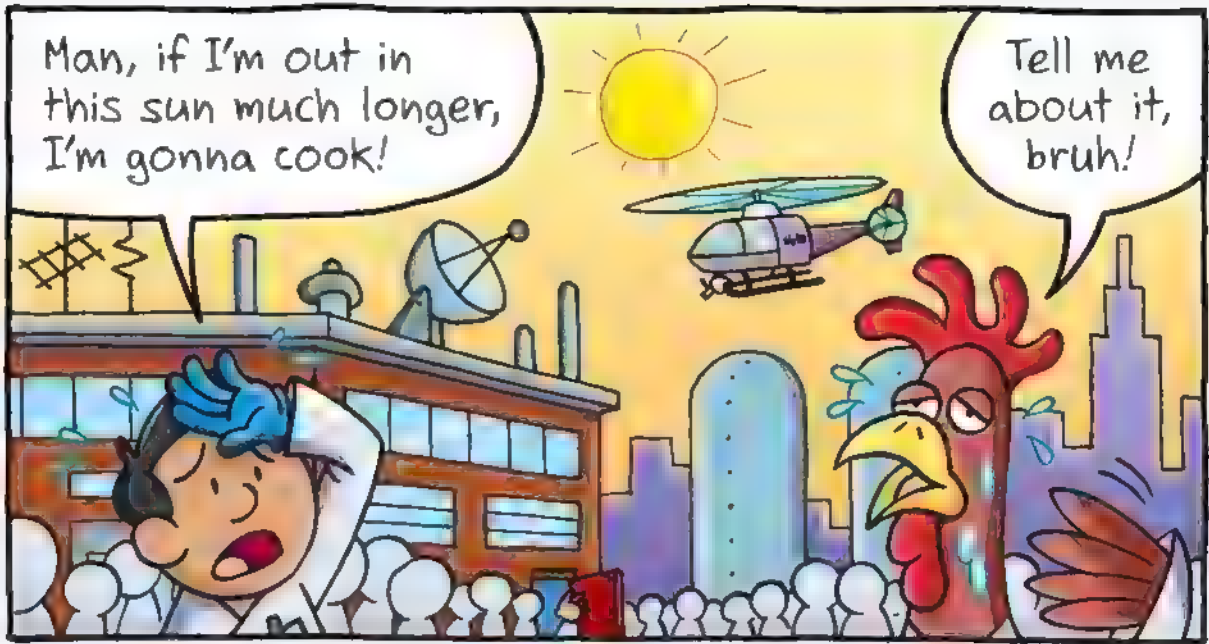
Ooh, that works! Steve's an okay guy.

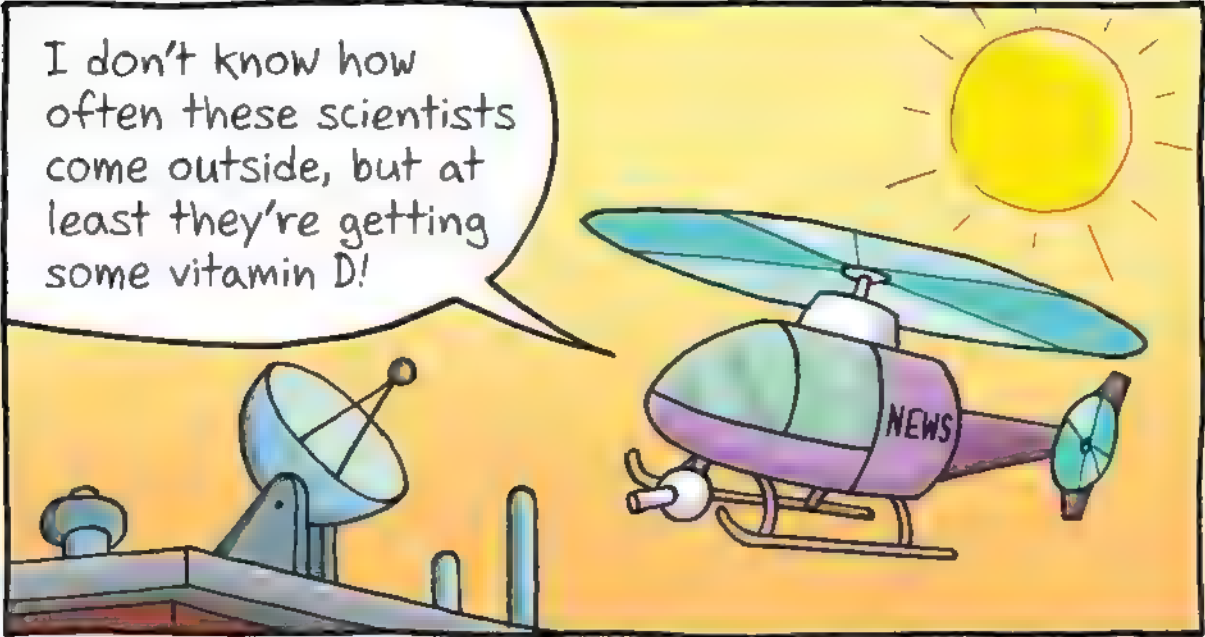
Now, run along outside and tell everyone recess is over.



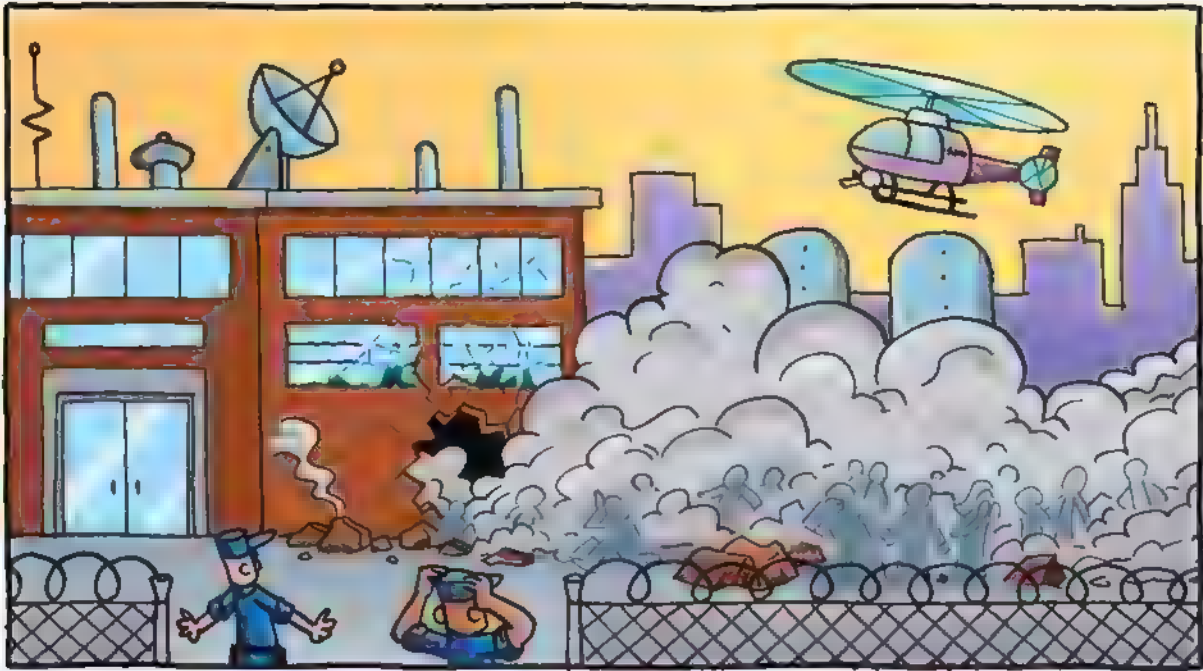
Aye, aye!





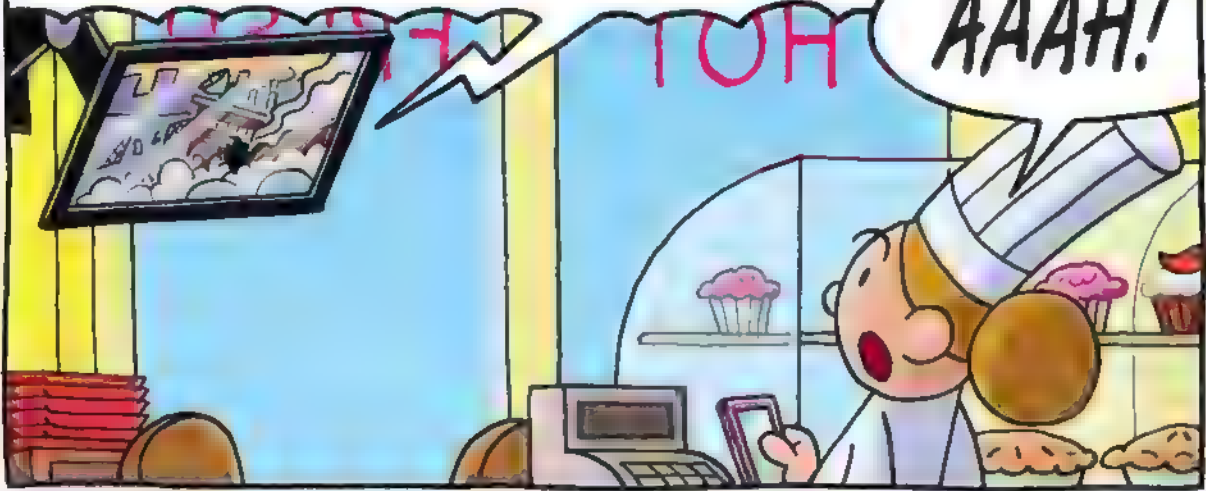


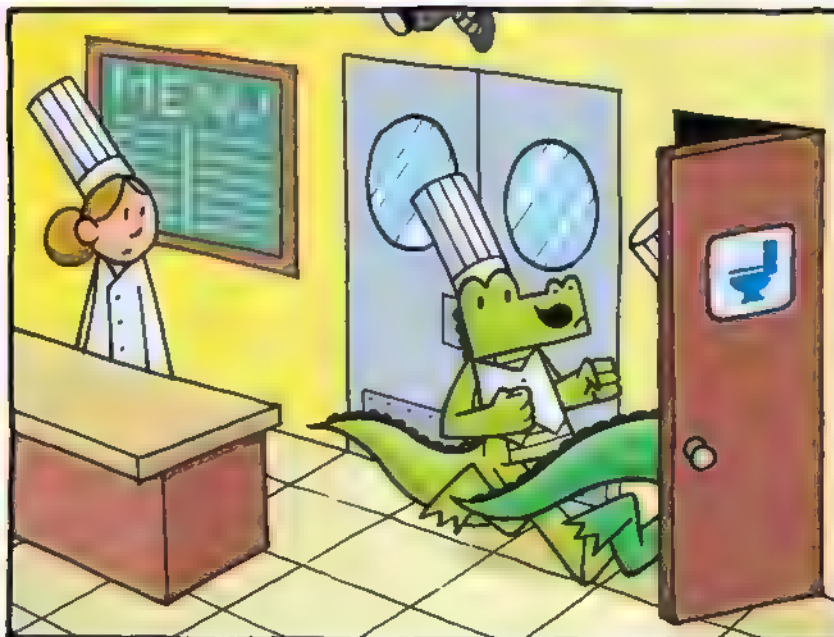


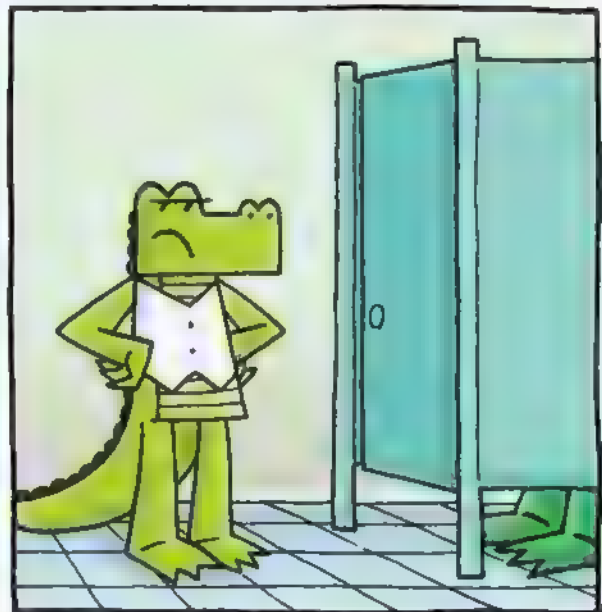
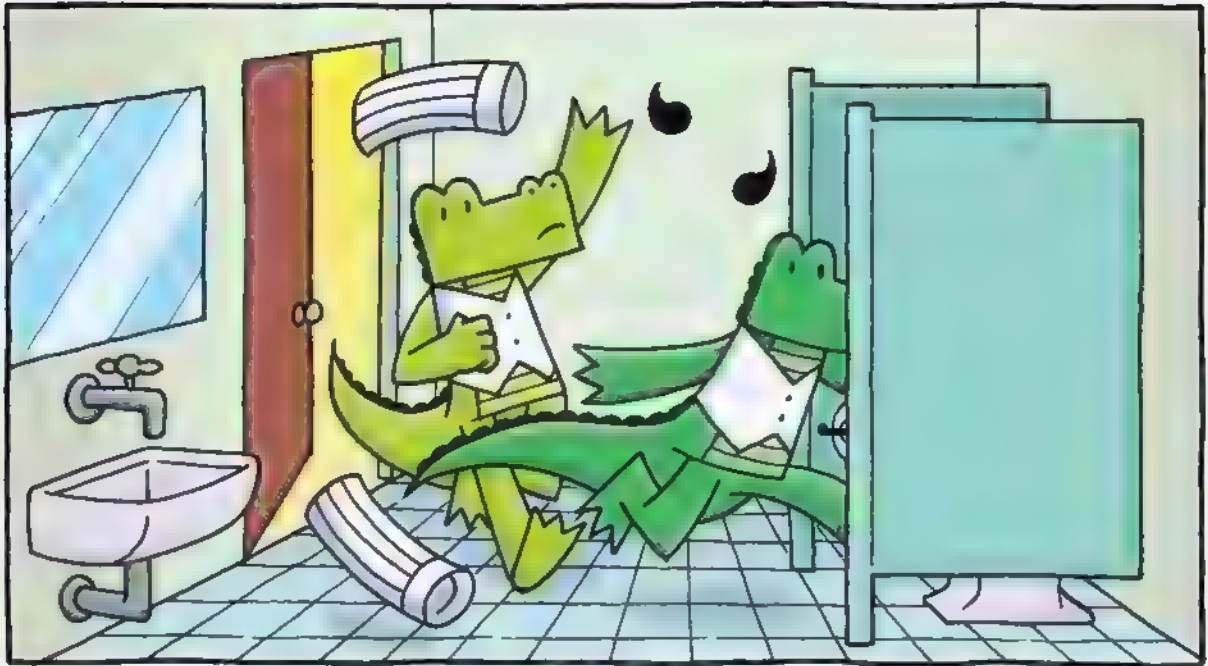


Chapter 6

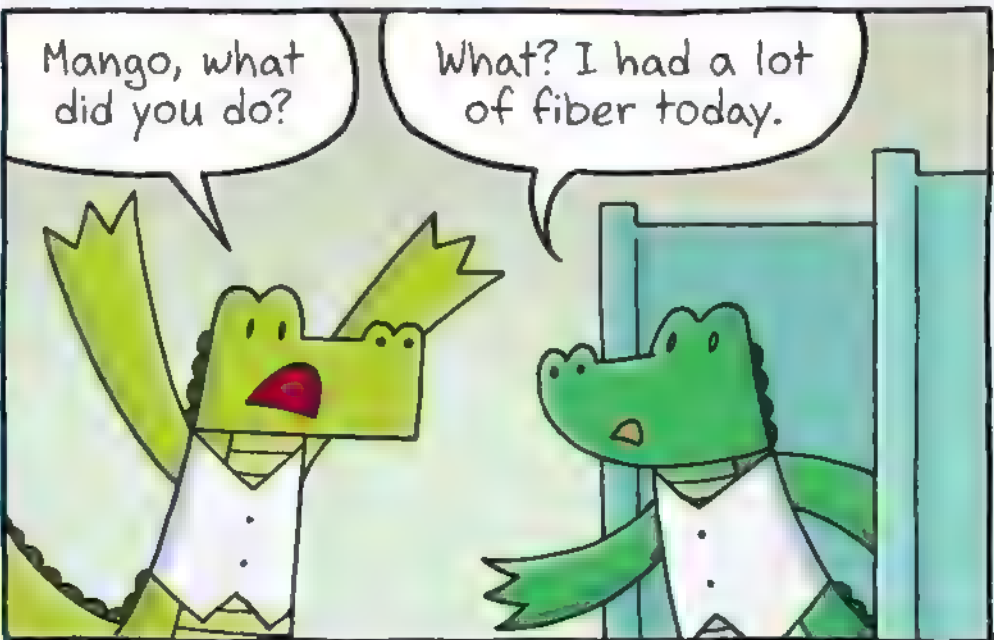
This is the *Action News Now* helicopter in the sky!
An **EXPLOSION** has just **ROCKED** the Science
Factory down on Electric Avenue!







FLUSH



Mango, what did you do?

What? I had a lot of fiber today.

Mango, you know the quickest way to S.U.I.T. HQ is to flush ourselves into the sewer!

Oh, riiiiiiight...



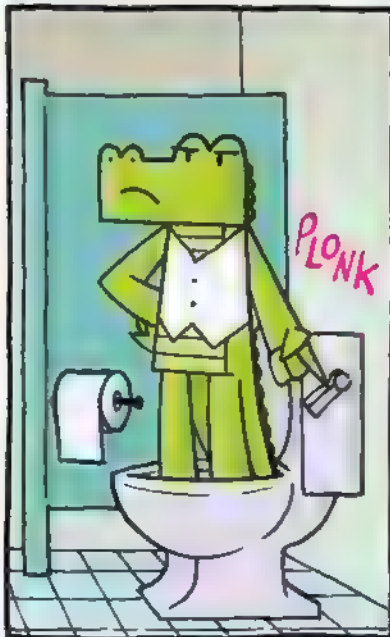
NOW WHAT ARE YOU DOING??

I'M WASHING MY HANDS! SHEESH, how were YOU raised??

Are you ready now?

Yes.

Um...



Investigators are in the sewers!



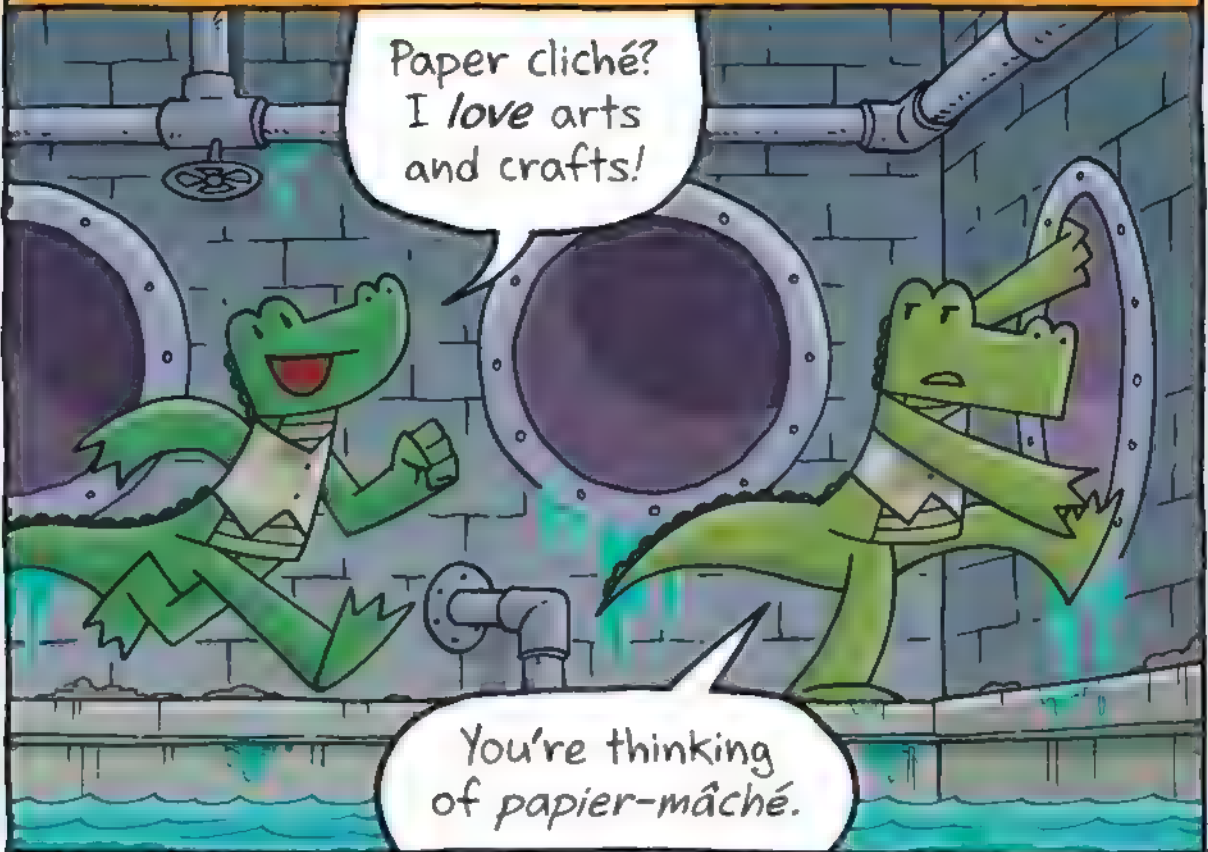
Ooh, another montage!

They're not lawbreakers, they're law-doers!



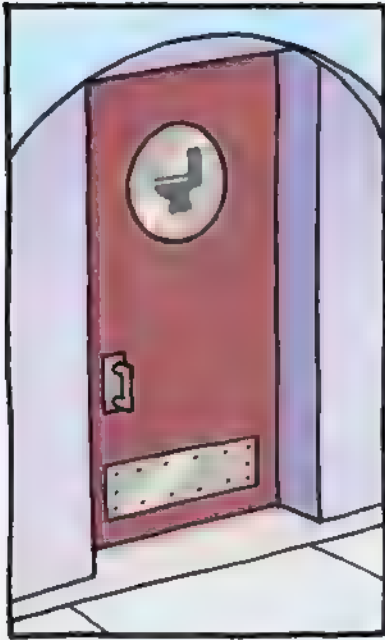
Dirty law-doers. Yuck!

♪♪ Alligators in the sewers might be a cliché... ♪♪



♪ ...but the Investigators are gonna save the day! ♪





InvestiGators, reporting for duty!

Heh heh...
"Doody."



Uh... Where
are we?

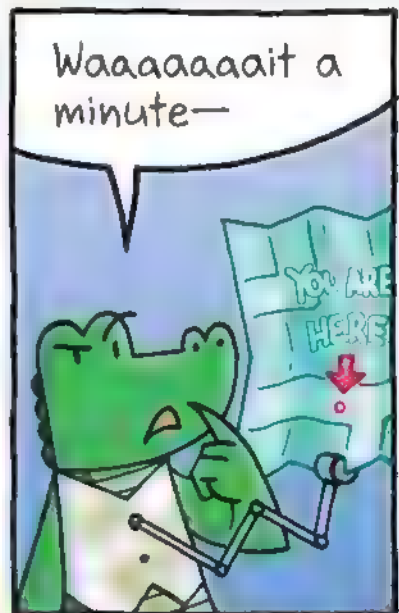
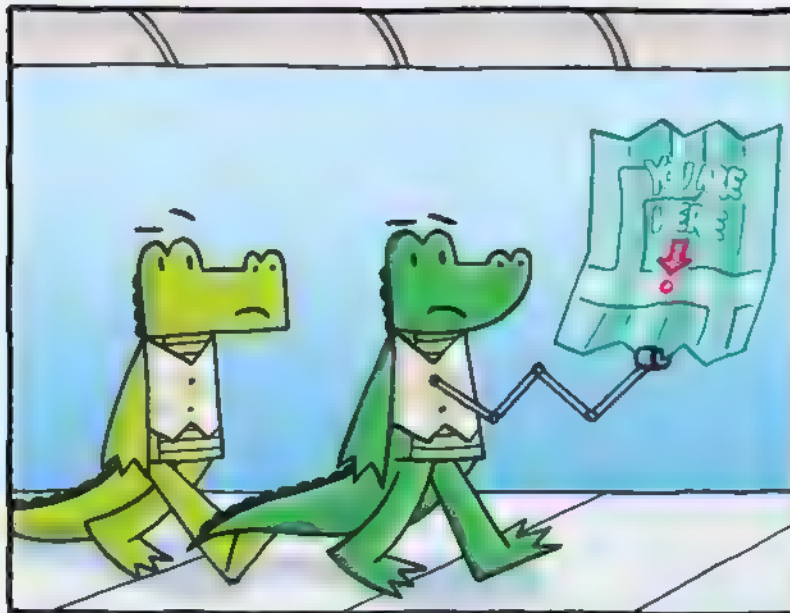
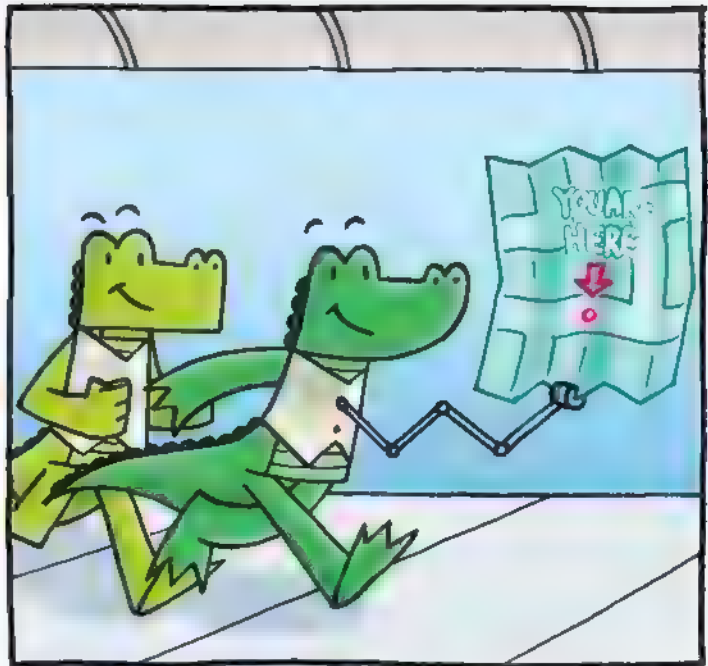
Good question. S.U.I.T. HQ is huge.
Every time I come here I come out
of a different bathroom!



It's like being lost
in a mall.

Oh, wait!



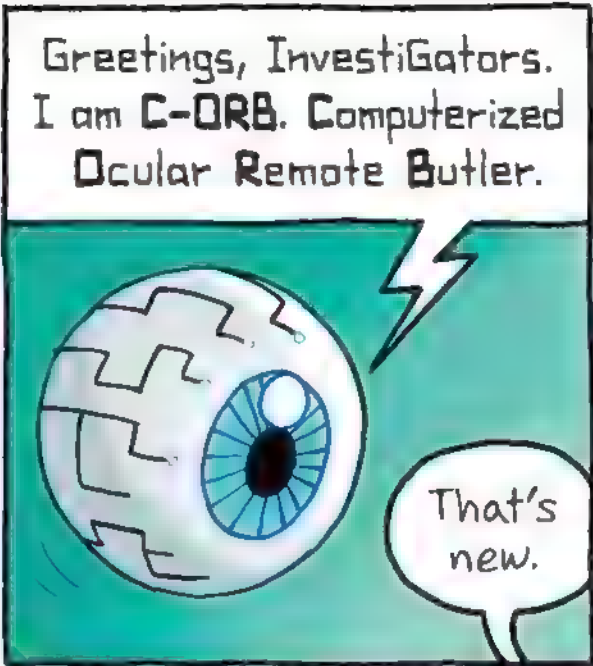




There you are!

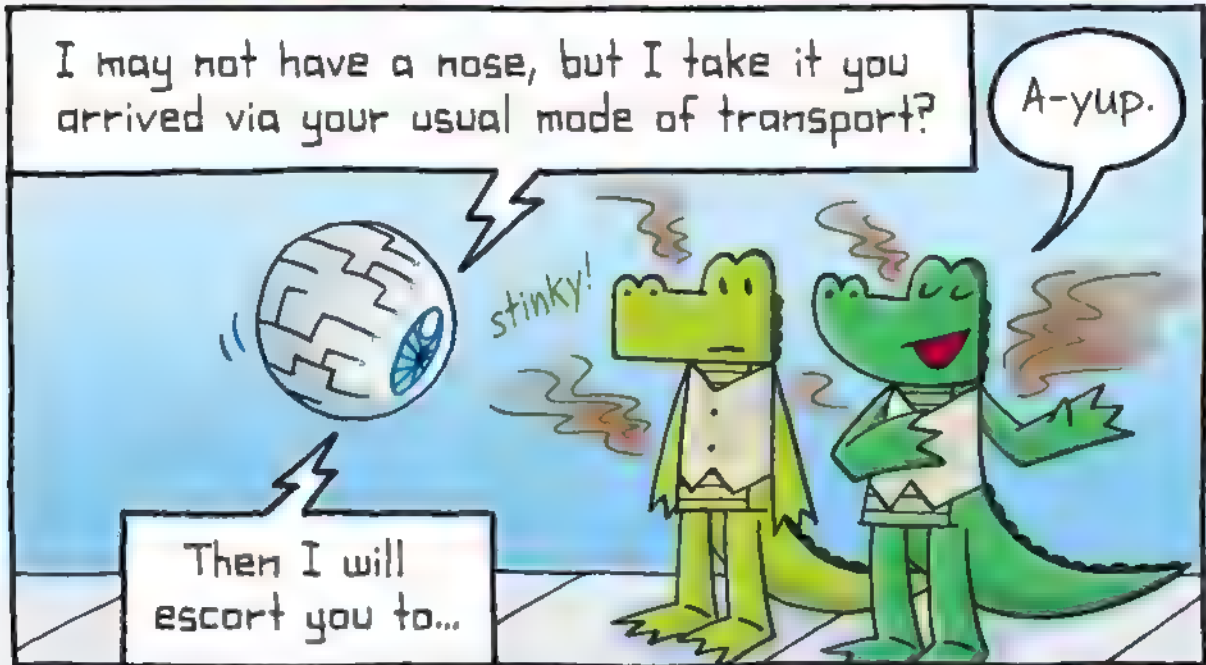
AAH!

A floating eyeball!



Greetings, InvestiGators. I am C-ORB. Computerized Ocular Remote Butler.

That's new.



I may not have a nose, but I take it you arrived via your usual mode of transport?

A-yup.

stinky!

Then I will escort you to...



...DECONTAMINATION!

Oh, I already washed my hands—

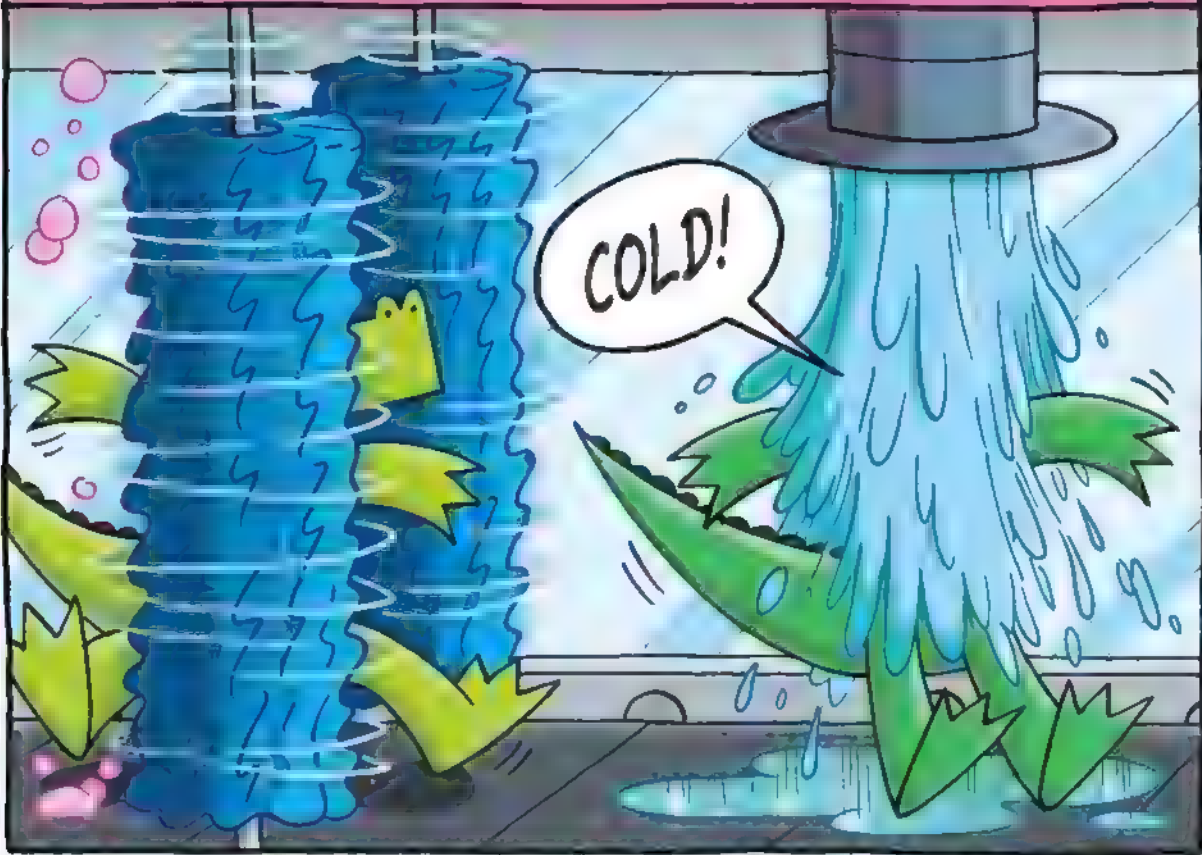
♪ ♪ ♪ Lather, rinse, and repeat! ♪ ♪ ♪



♪ With soap and shampoo, you'll smell so sweet! ♪

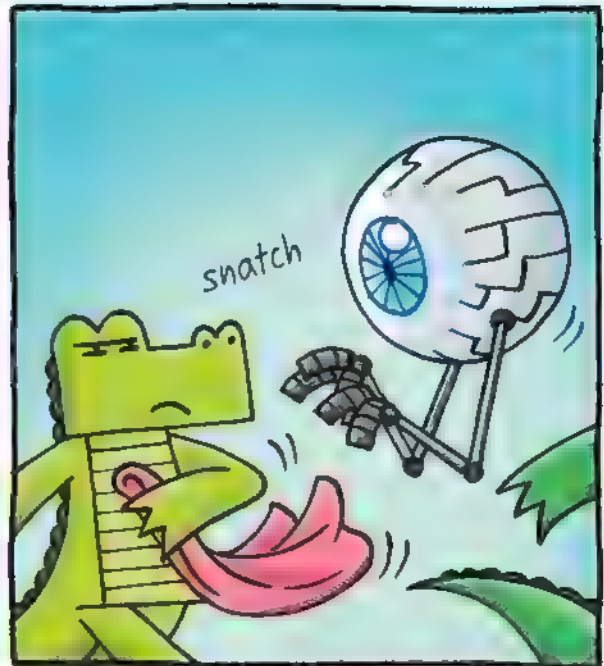


♪♪ This machine will make you squeaky clean! ♪♪

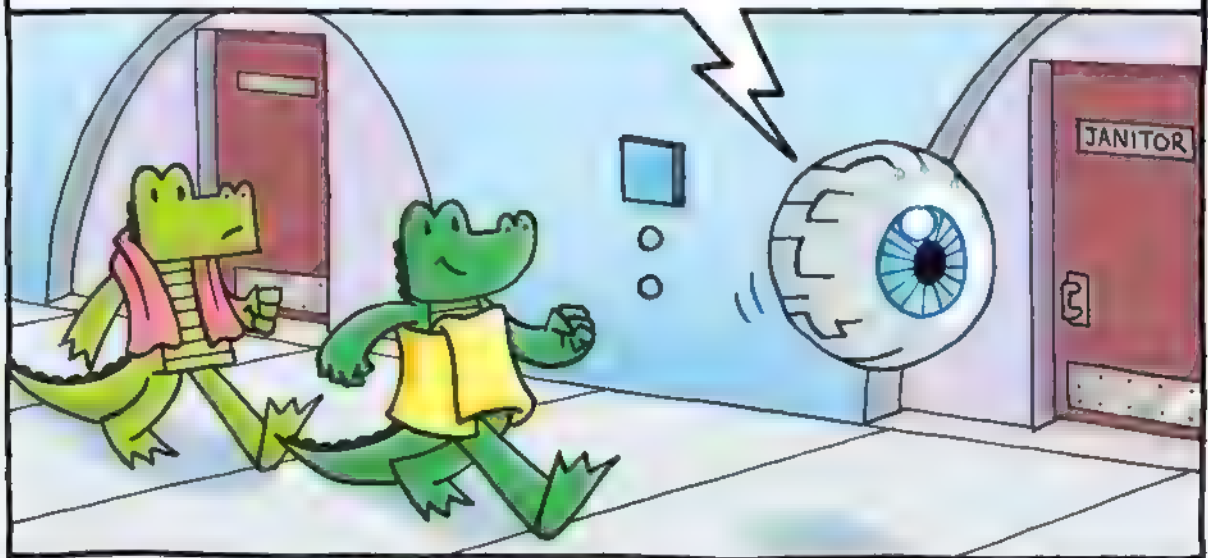


♪♪ Clean on the outside, clean in between! ♪♪

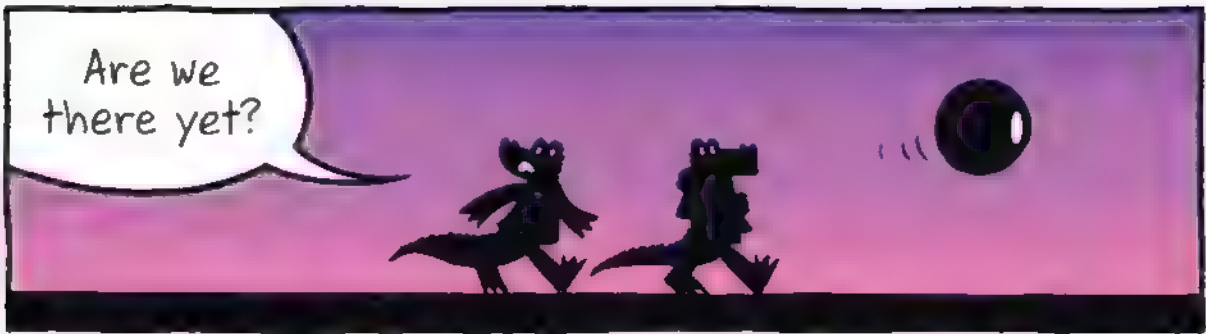


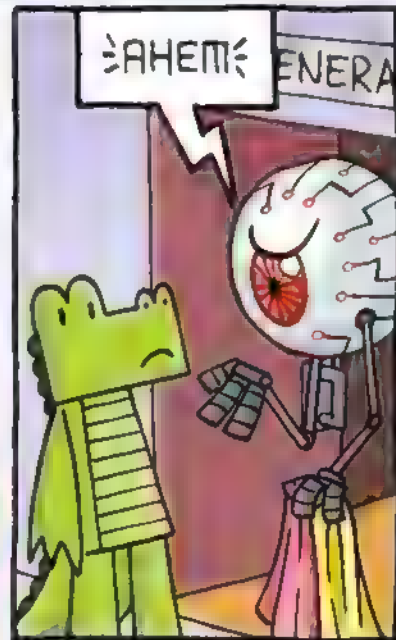


This way, Gators, to the General Inspector's office.









InvestigAtors! Thanks for coming so promptly. I know you're in the middle of the Gustavo Mustachio case.



Approximately eighteen pages ago, an explosion rocked the Science Factory down on Electric Avenue!



GOOD GOLLY, Eighteen pages! Has it really been that long?



Anyway! You're our agents nearest that location... Or, you were, before I ordered you to come here... But you will be **AGAIN**, once you get back there!



There's little to go on, but I have a hunch this explosion and your current investigation may be connected.



I'm sorry, HUNCH. I said "lunch" when I meant "hunch." I'm feeling a bit peckish.



But enough about me. Mango, Brash—it's time to SUIT up and not let S.U.I.T. down!



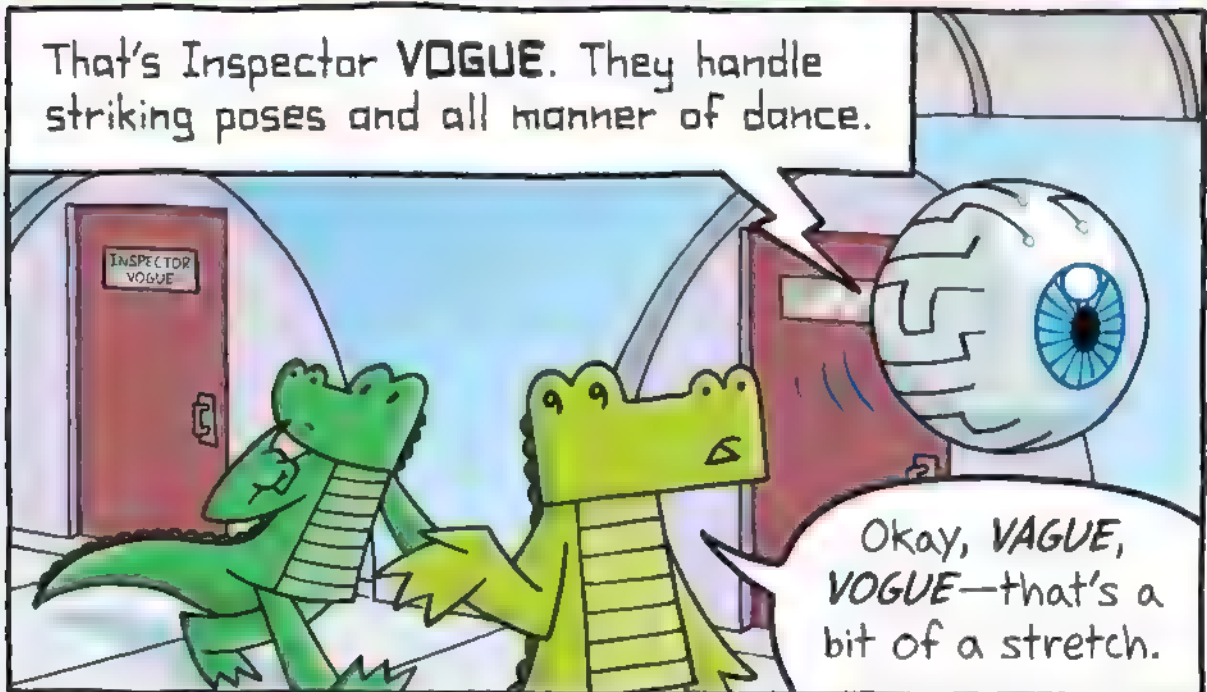
This way, InvestiGators. Time to get fitted for your new V.E.S.T.s!





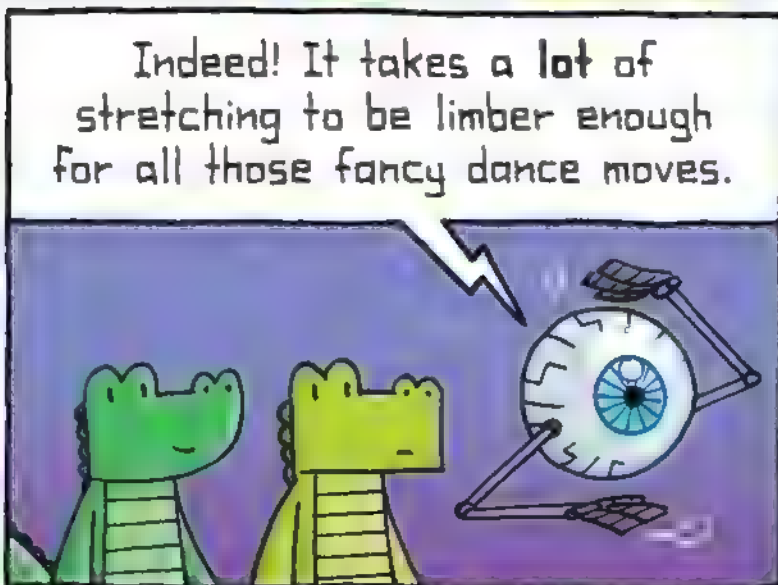
Hey, why does Inspector VAGUE get two offices?

INSPECTOR VOGUE



That's Inspector **VOGUE**. They handle striking poses and all manner of dance.

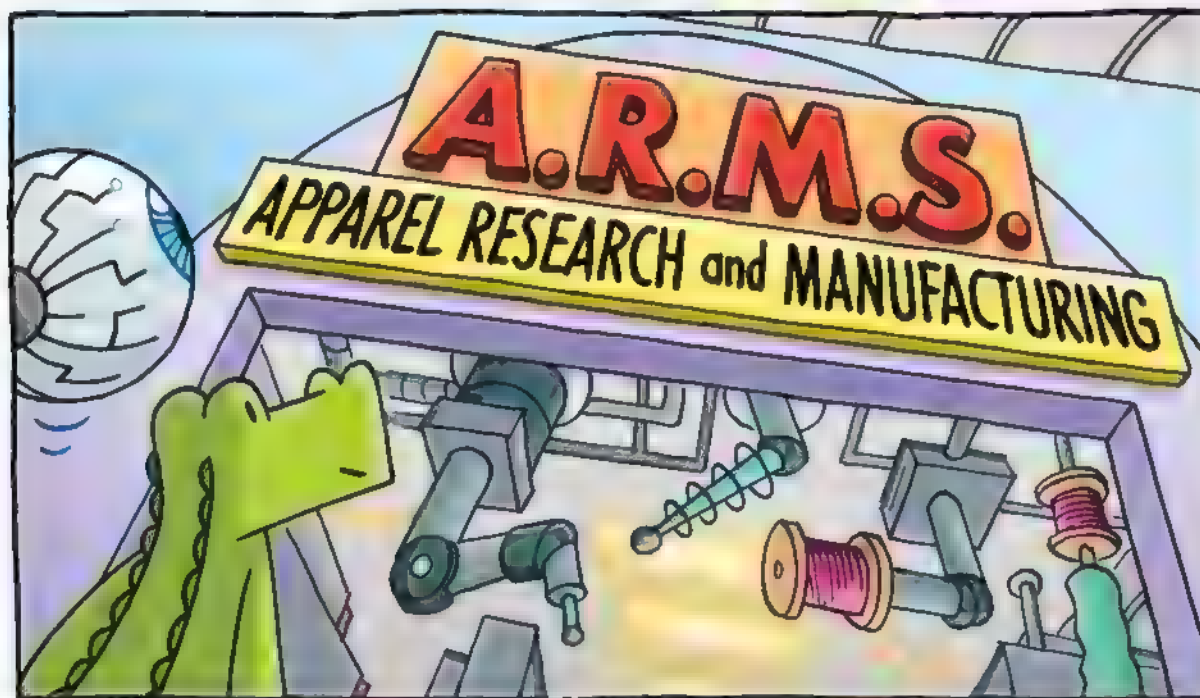
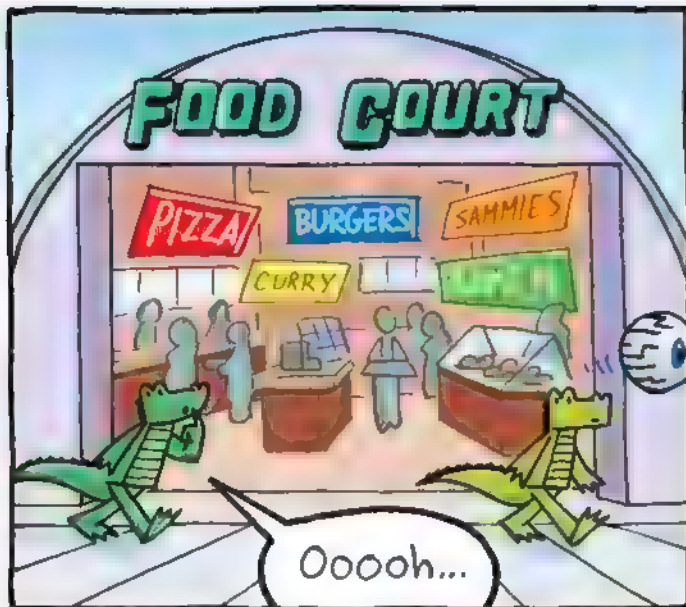
Okay, VAGUE, VOGUE—that's a bit of a stretch.



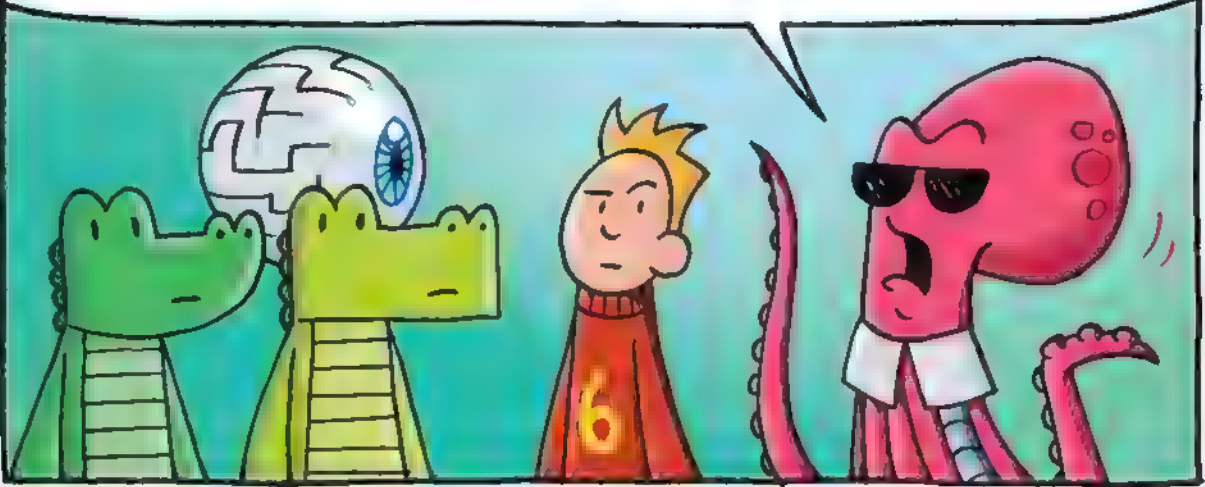
Indeed! It takes a lot of stretching to be limber enough for all those fancy dance moves.



Keep up, Gators!



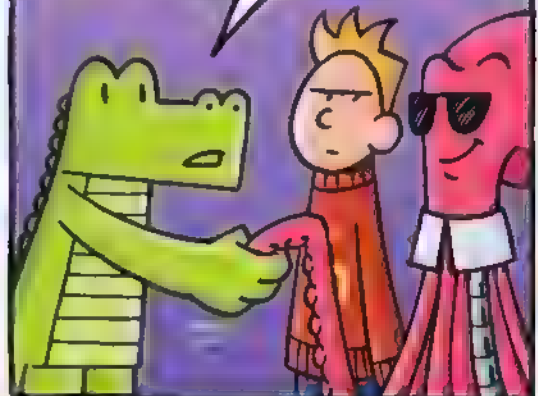
NO! No, no. *NOT* six. The S is for **SVEN!**
I am Sven Septapus, lead designer of A.R.M.S.



I also have the **MOST** arms.
Look at them. Look at all
these arms!

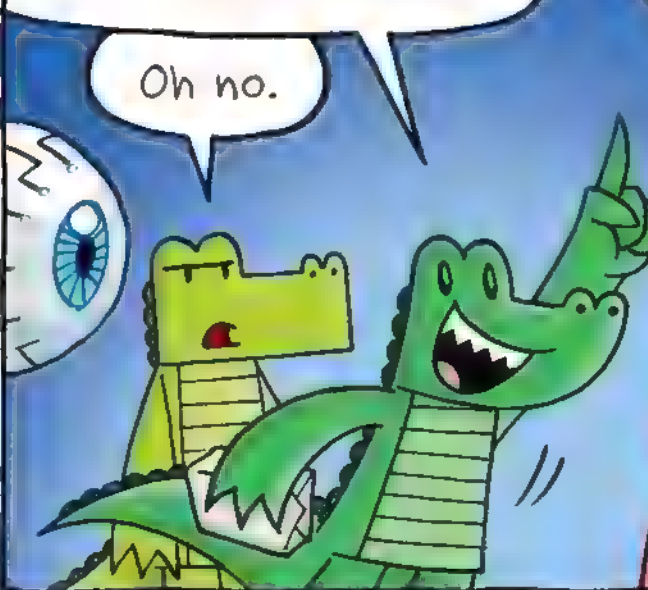


Agent Six.
Agent Sven.



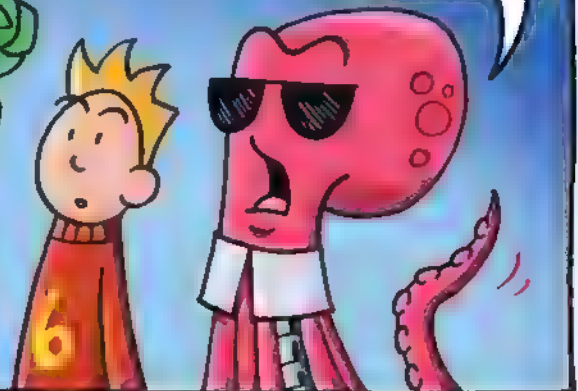
OH! I have a **JOKE!**

Oh no.



WHY WAS SIX AFRAID
OF SVEN?

Because—





BECAUSE SVEN EIGHT NINE!

Yes, yes, yes.
Much funny. We all
have the humor.

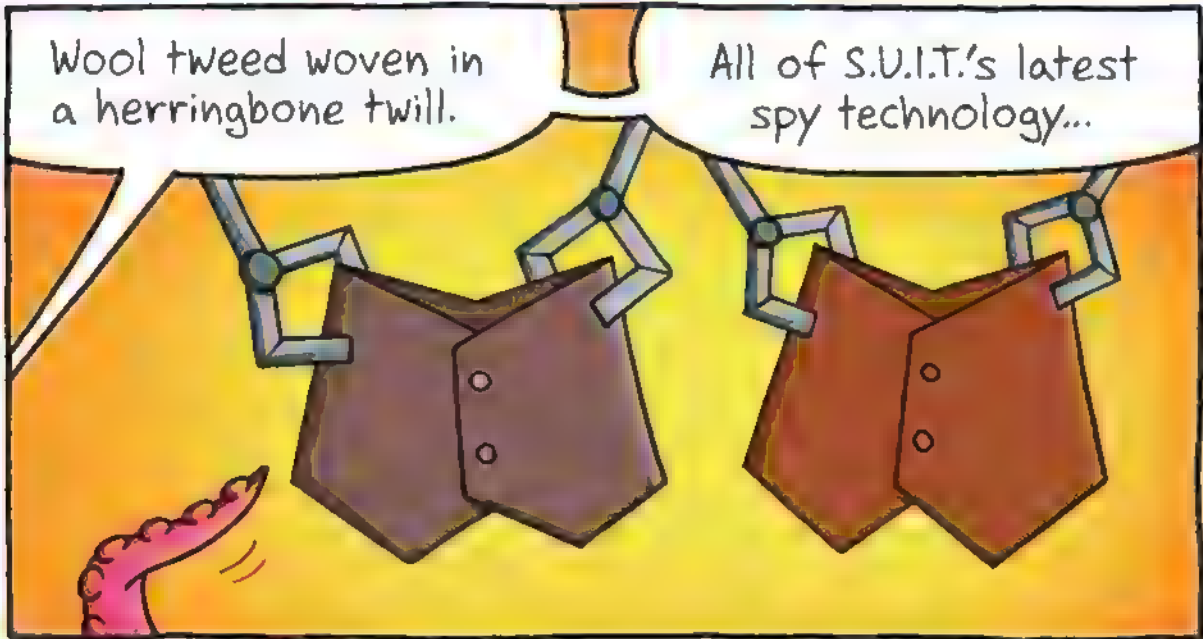


Now let's get
you Gators into
new V.E.S.T.s.

SNAP!



These are our
latest models.



Wool tweed woven in
a herringbone twill.

All of S.U.I.T.'s latest
spy technology...



Peanut butter and peanut butter?

No, peanut butter and pickle and bacon.

What about the V.E.S.T.s?!

≡Gulp!≡

Does it come in blue? Blue would really bring out the color in my eyes.

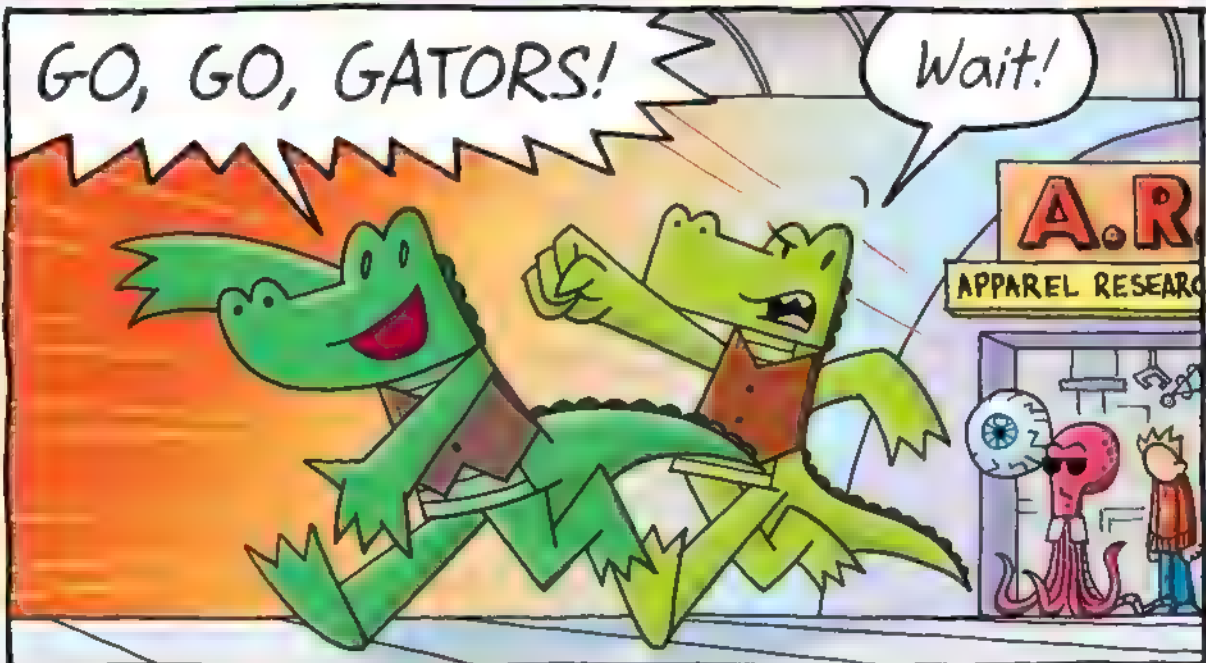
Mango, your eyes are just two little black dots like mine!

Mine too. I blame the artist for being LAZY.

?!

MMMPH!!!

AAH!



Chapter 7

Just then, about twenty-six pages ago...

An **EXPLOSION** has just **ROCKED** the Science Factory down on Electric Avenue!



Did an experiment go wrong? It's hard to see what's happening through all the smoke...

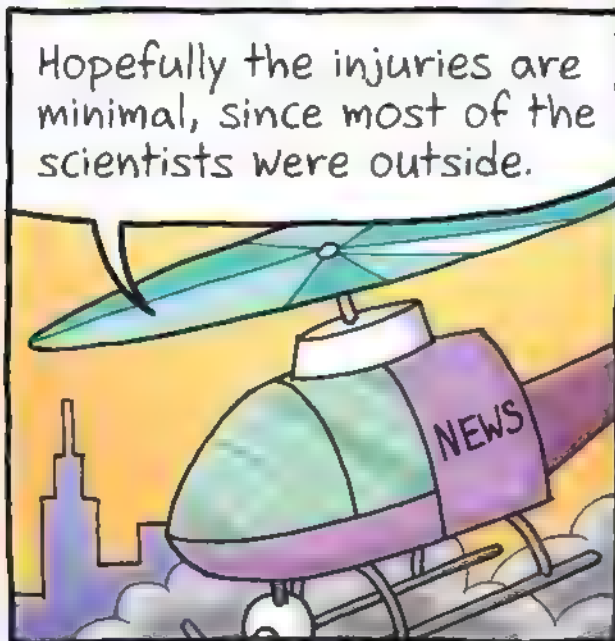
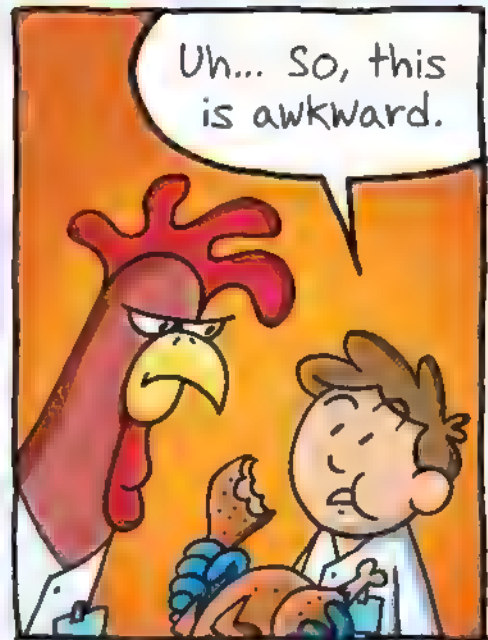
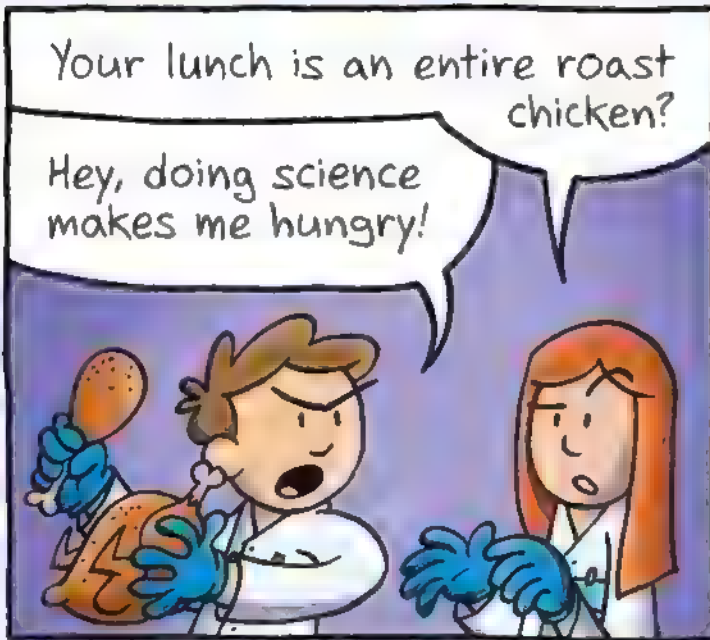
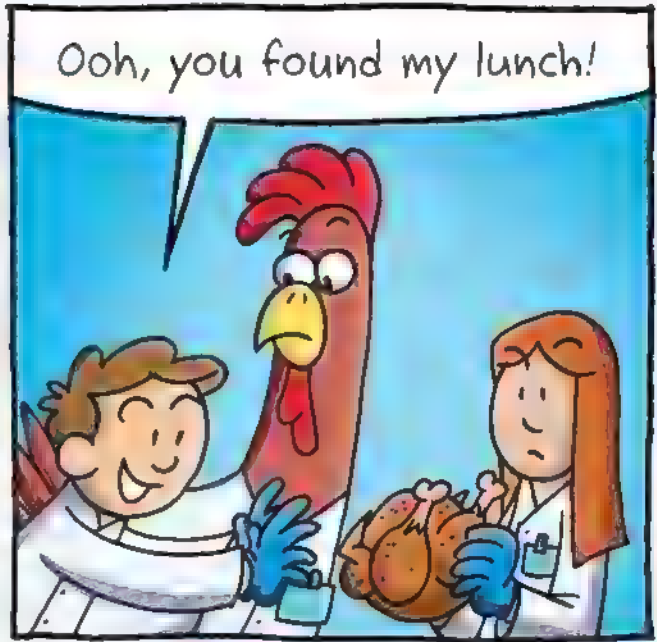
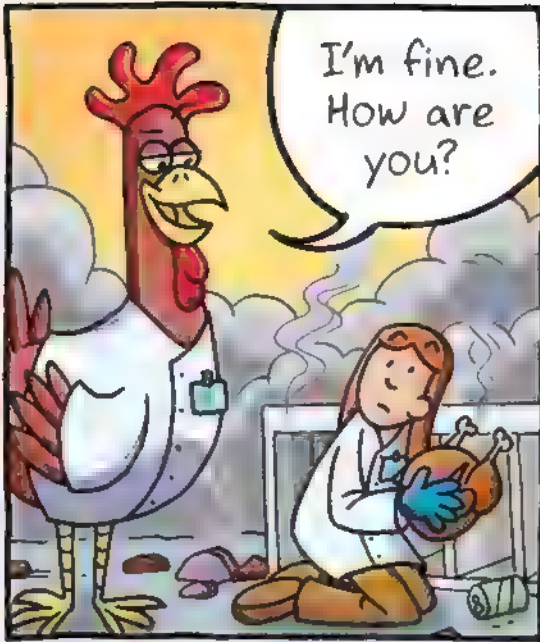


≡Cough! Cough!≡
Is everyone all right?



Dr. Doodledoo!
N0000000!!





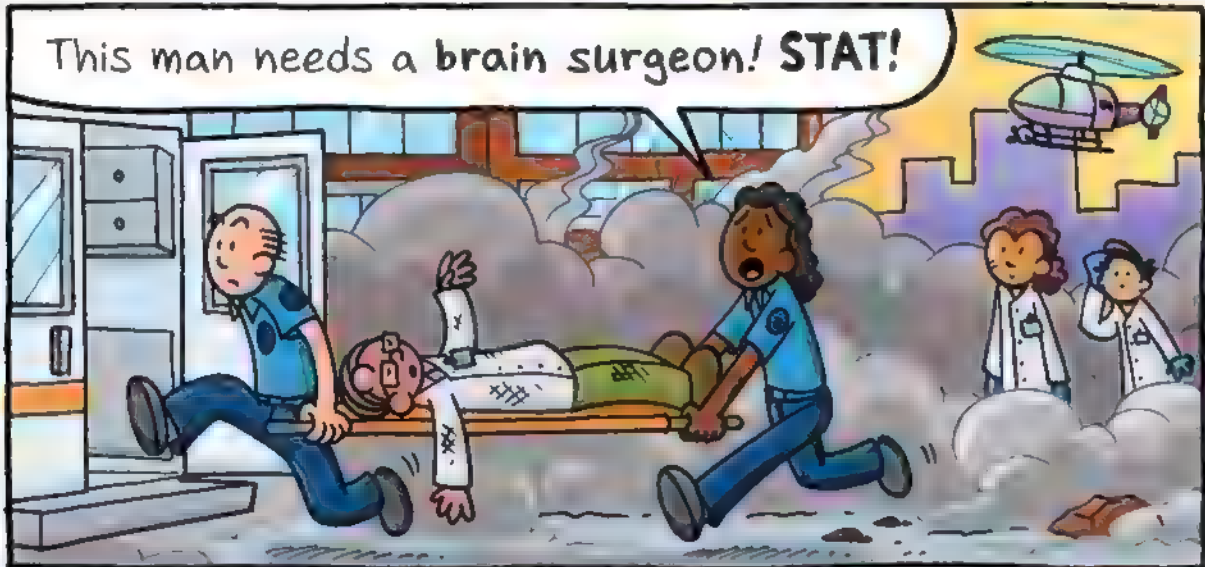


Over here!

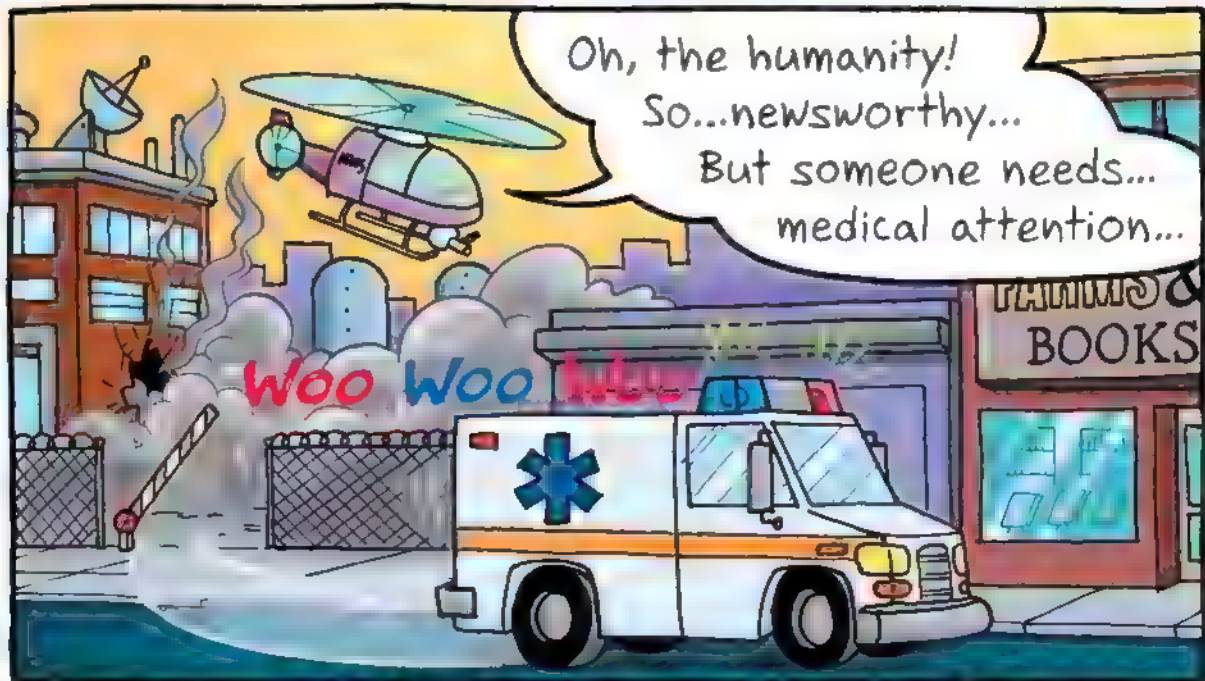


This Head Scientist has a HEAD INJURY!

oog...



This man needs a brain surgeon! STAT!



Oh, the humanity!
So...newsworthy...
But someone needs...
medical attention...





Ugh! Being DOCTOR COPTER is both a blessing and a curse!



Hey! The bathroom is for customers only!



Wow! What a catastrophe!



We were in the middle of a **Code Sunburn**, so everyone was outside. A guy delivered a giant birthday cake for Bob, which I wheeled inside. Then I ran into one angry scientist, who was on his phone—it said something about a



jamboree on the screen. Don't think I've seen him since, but it can be hard to tell these scientists apart. Well, except for the chicken.

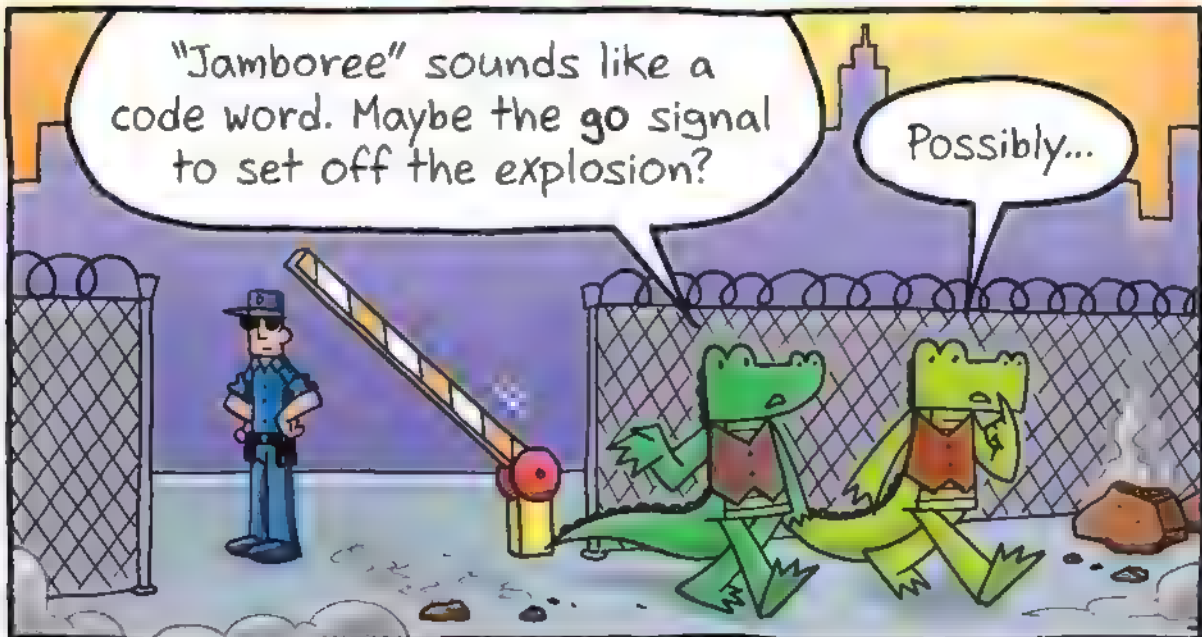
Oh, and the only **serious** injury seemed to be to the **Head Scientist**, who was just taken away in an ambulance.



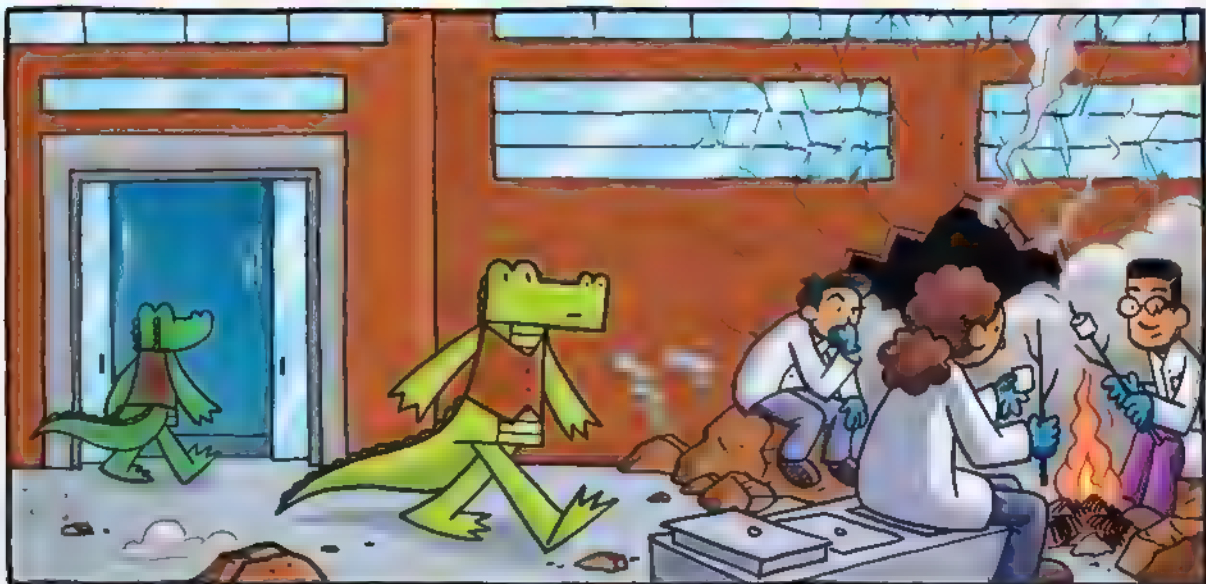
Thanks, security dude. Keep up the good work.

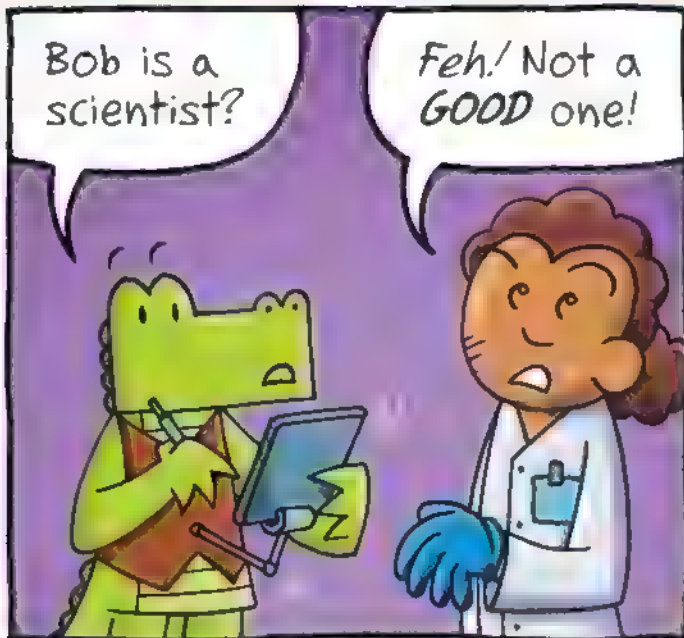
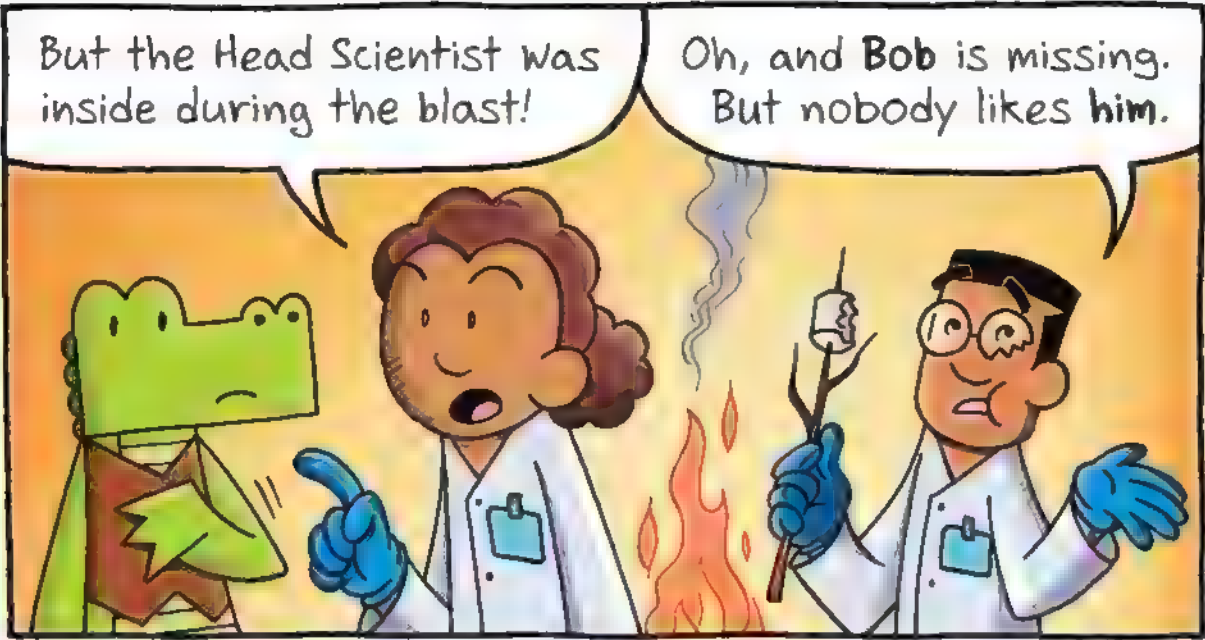


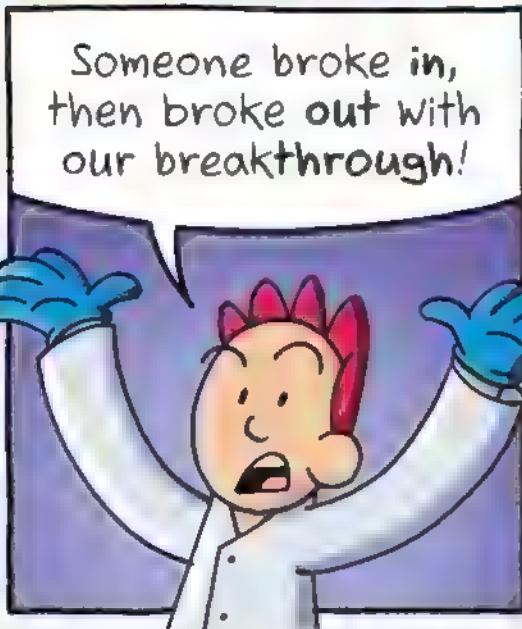
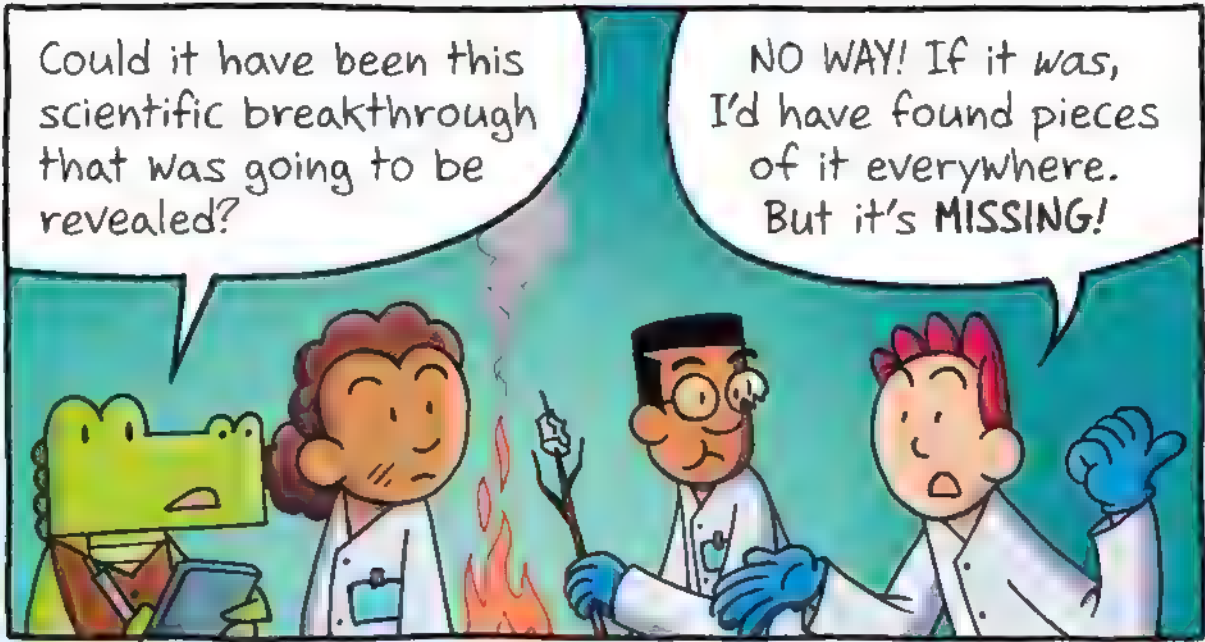
"Jamboree" sounds like a code word. Maybe the go signal to set off the explosion?



Possibly...

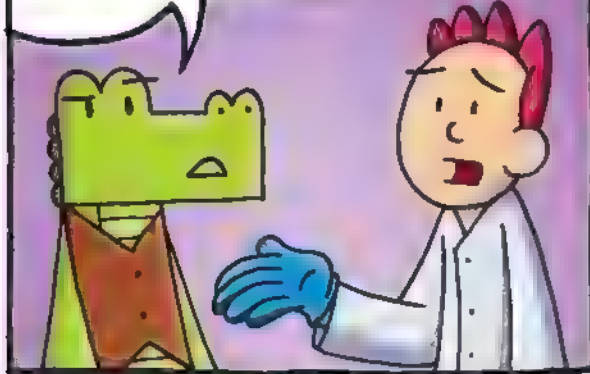




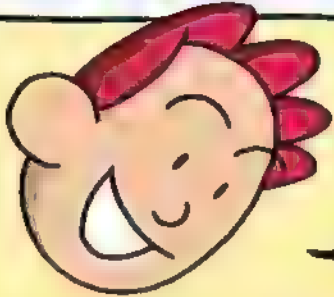
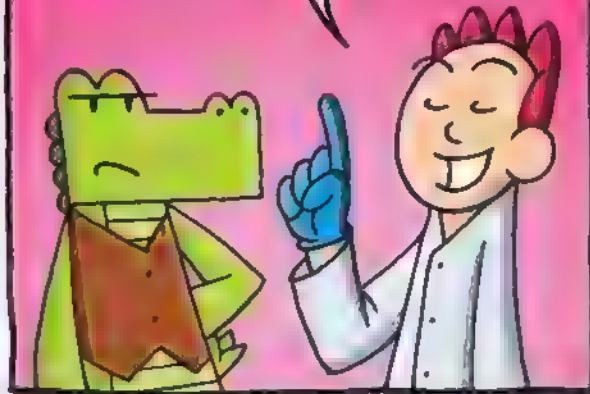


Okay, okay! It's called...
THE THINGAMABOB.

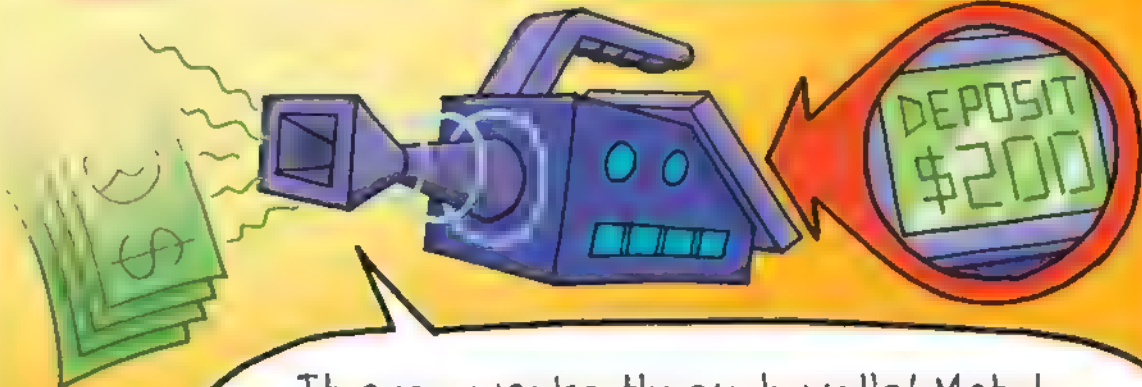
As in *Scientist Bob*?



No, wait! We changed it.
It's now called...THE
THINGAMASTEVE.

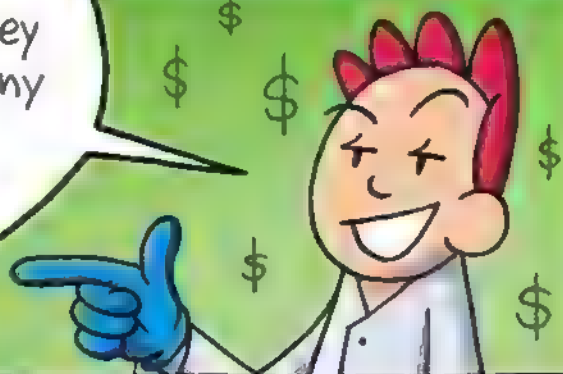


It's a laser beam that digitizes actual money. It erases the *physical* cash from existence, but puts its value inside a computer!



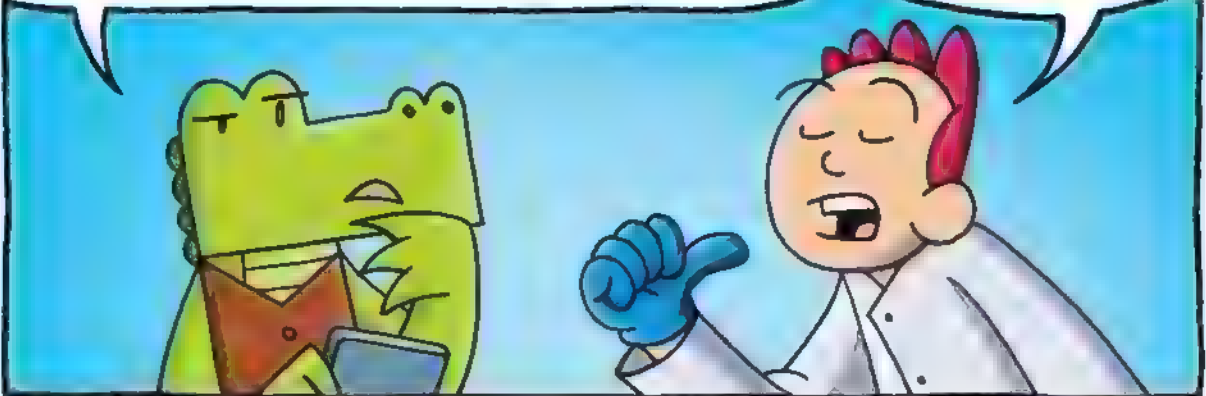
It even works through walls! Metal, brick, wood, straw—whatever! Just point it wherever there's money and it's yours!

It basically transfers money from the real world into any bank account you want—preferably a high-interest savings account.

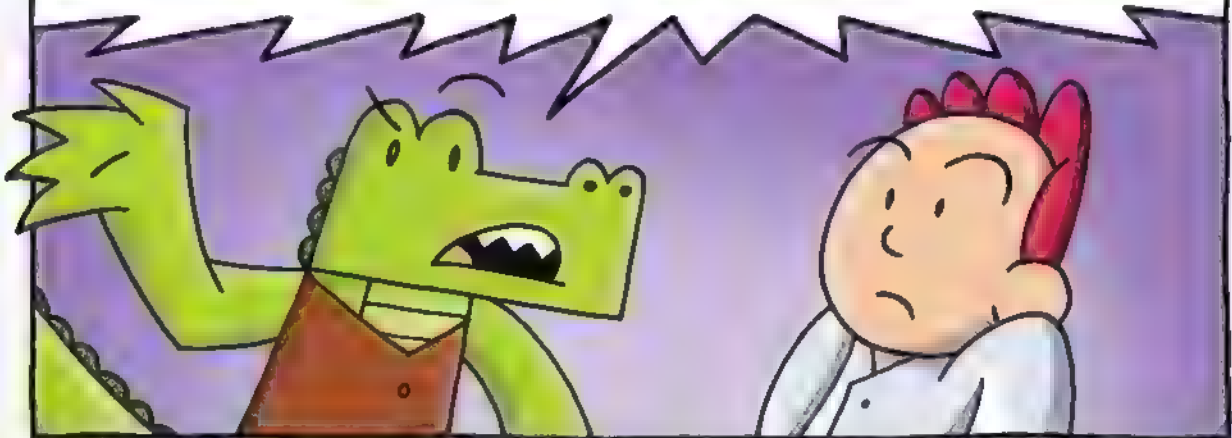


Why is it called the THINGAMASTEVE? Why not something like...the REVERSE ATM? Or...the DEPOSITRON? Or CASH GRAB?

Hey, we're scientists, not writers.

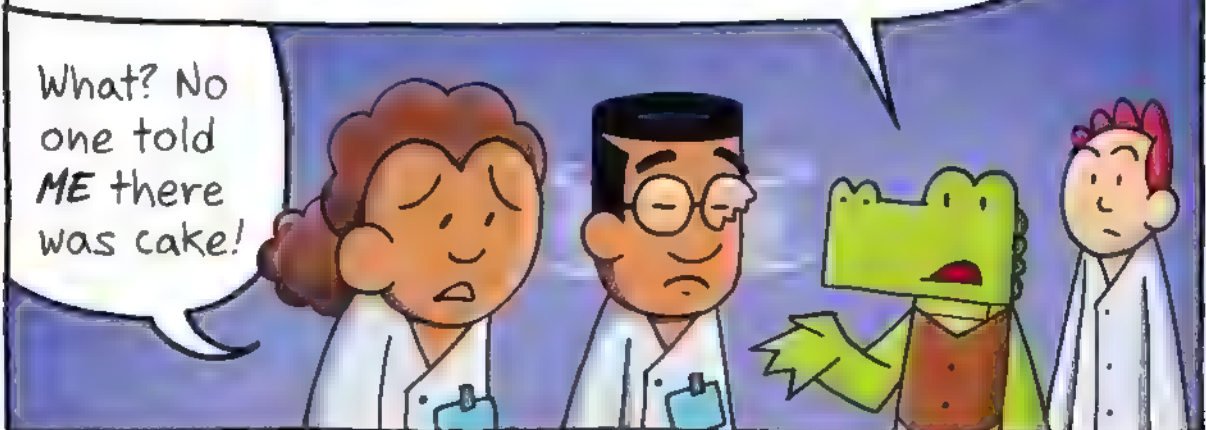


Well, I can see why you'd want to keep such a powerful tool safe. Pretty odd that you were going to **ANNOUNCE IT TO THE WORLD ON THE NEWS!**



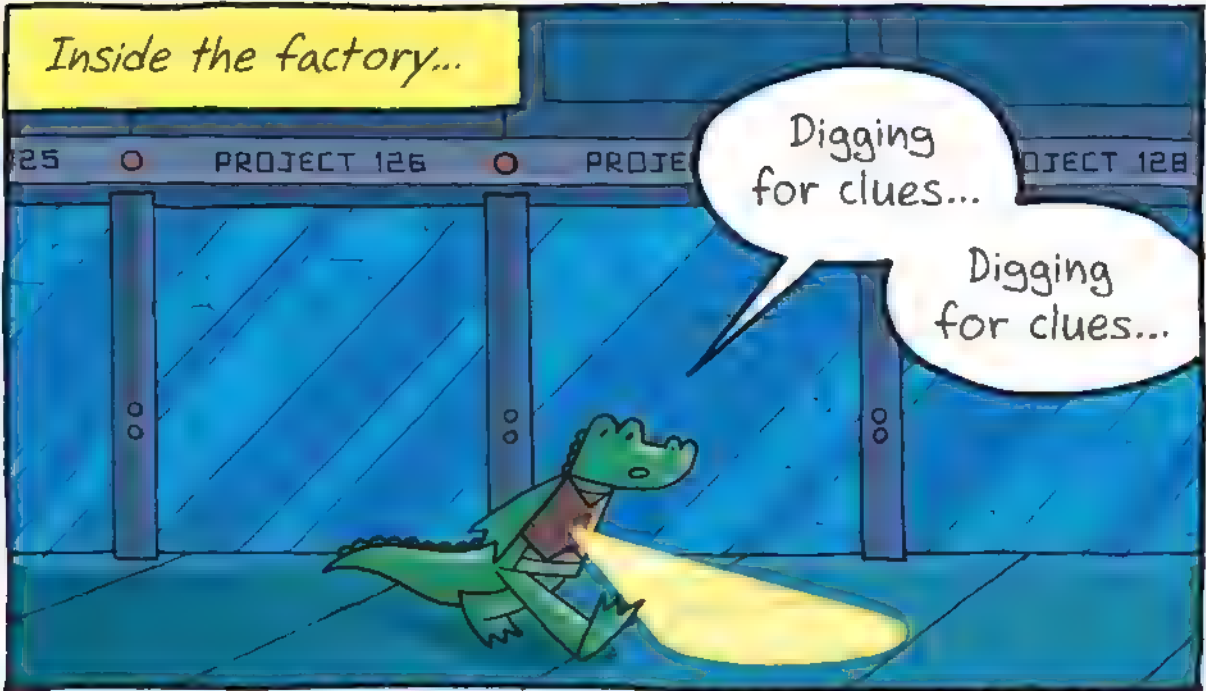
AAAANYWAY... You said you haven't seen Bob since the explosion. Could he have taken the device? Did anyone have any of his birthday cake?

What? No one told ME there was cake!





Inside the factory...

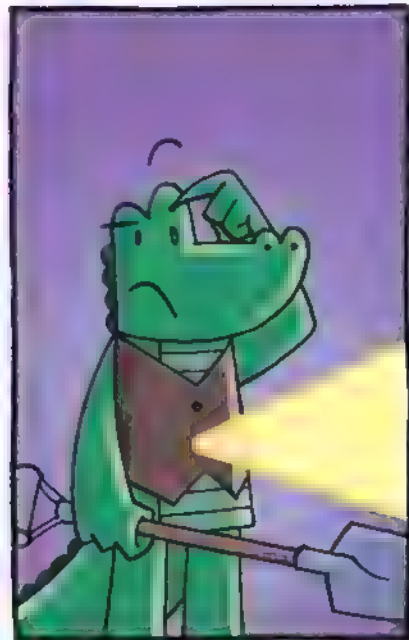
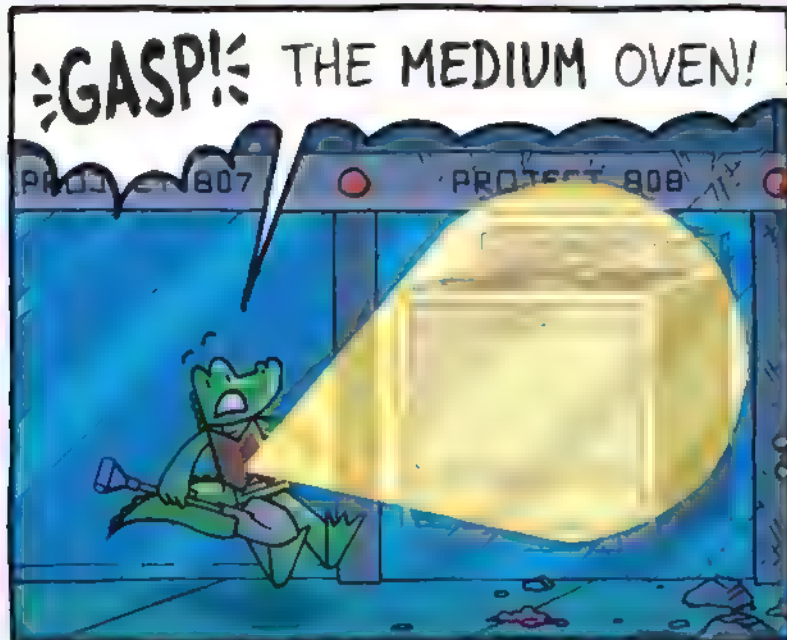
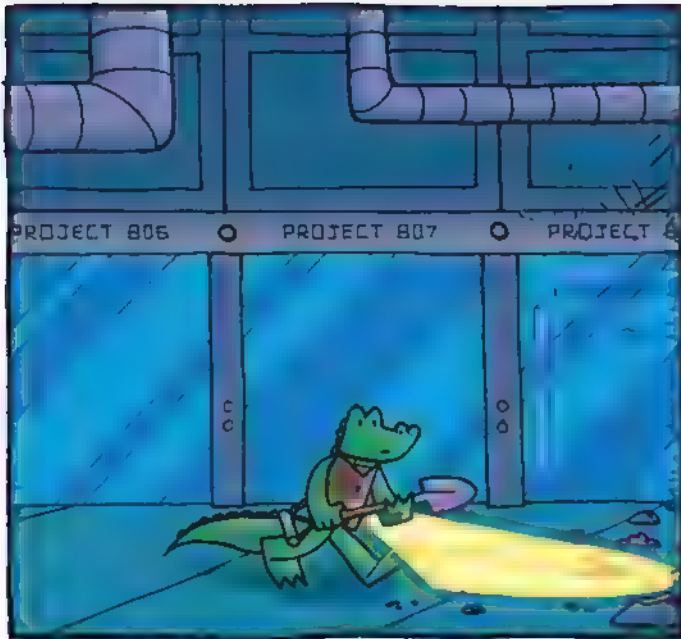


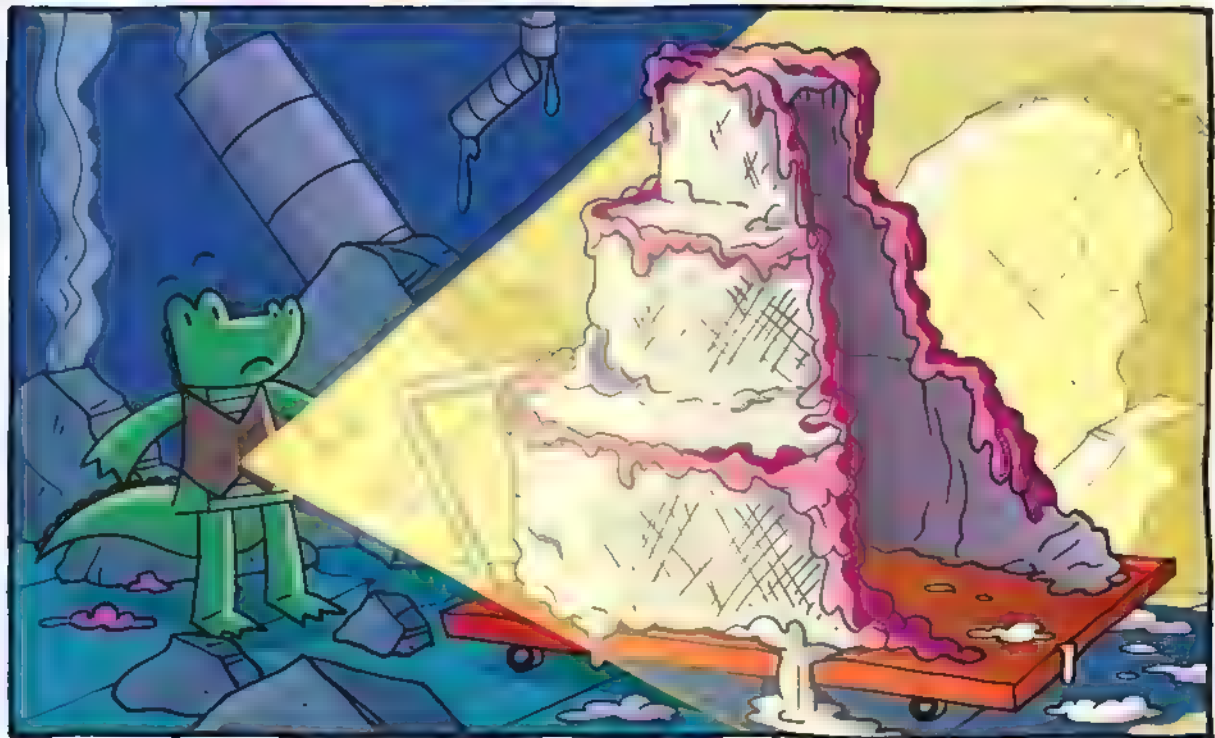
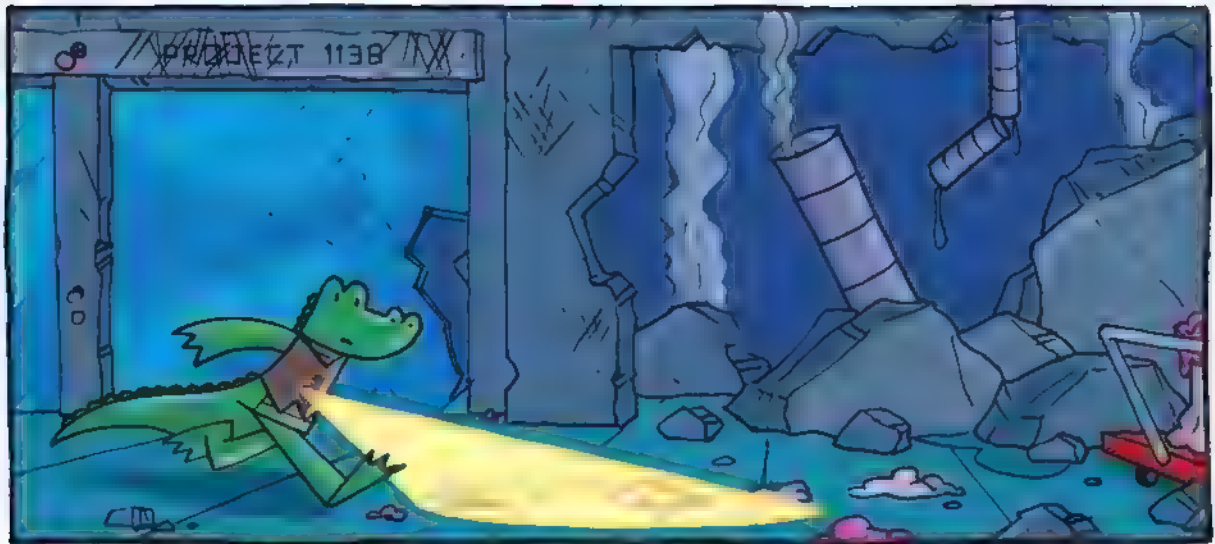
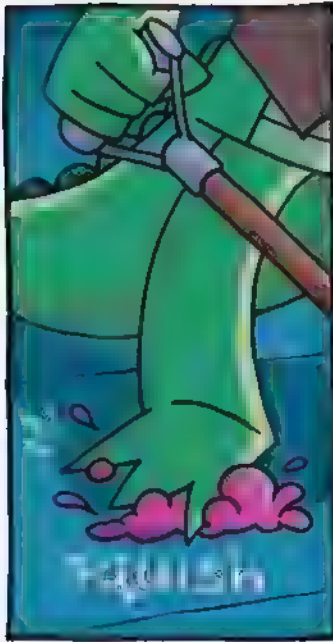
Oh! I know what would help here...



Digging for clues...

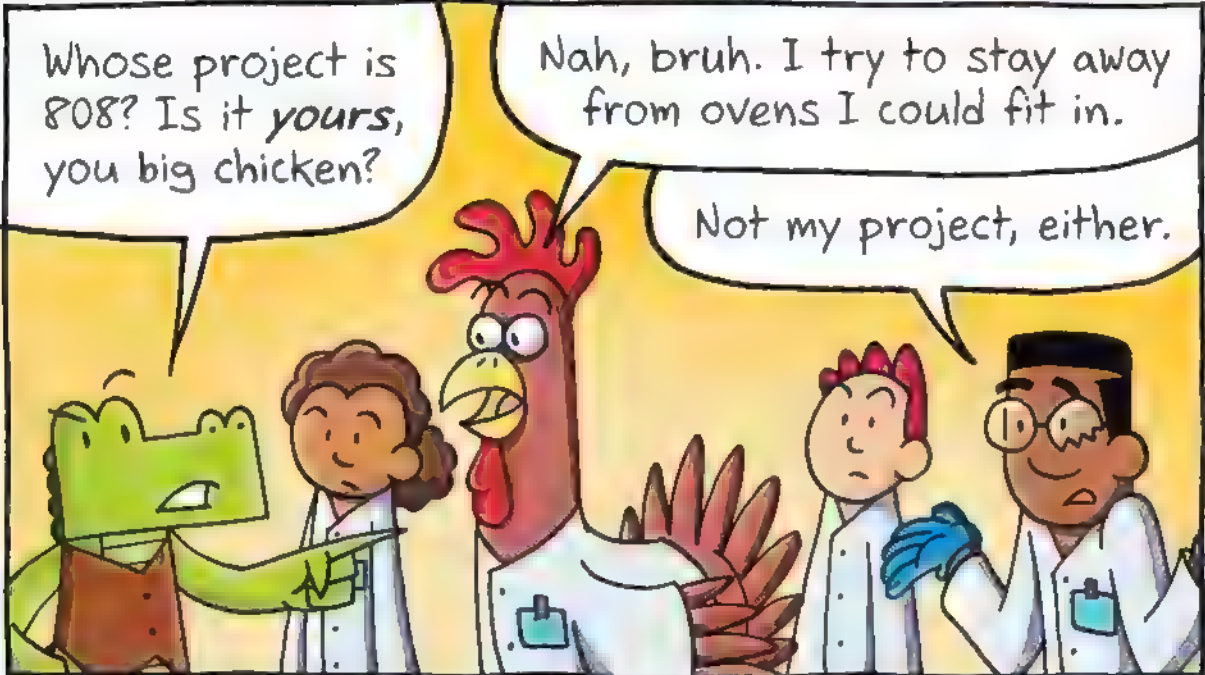
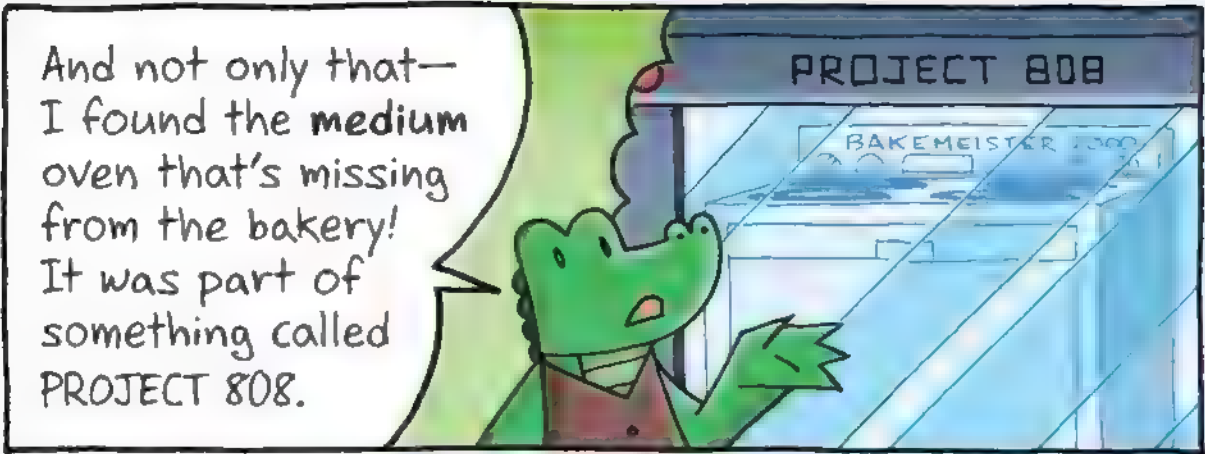


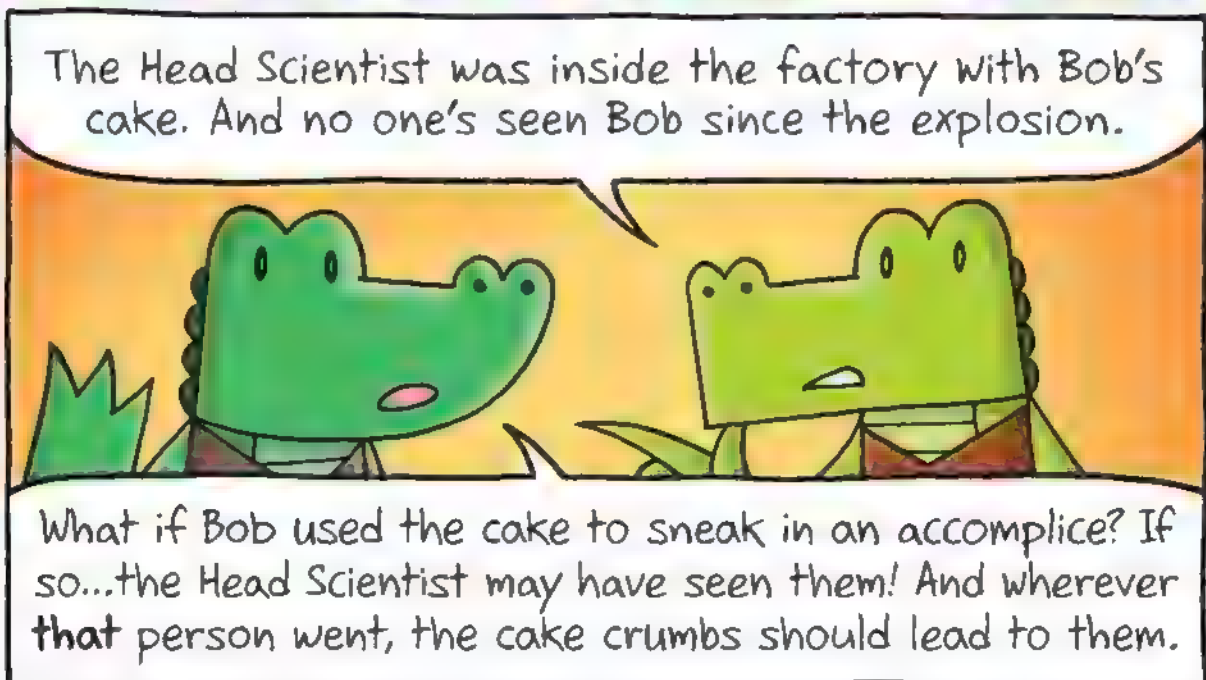




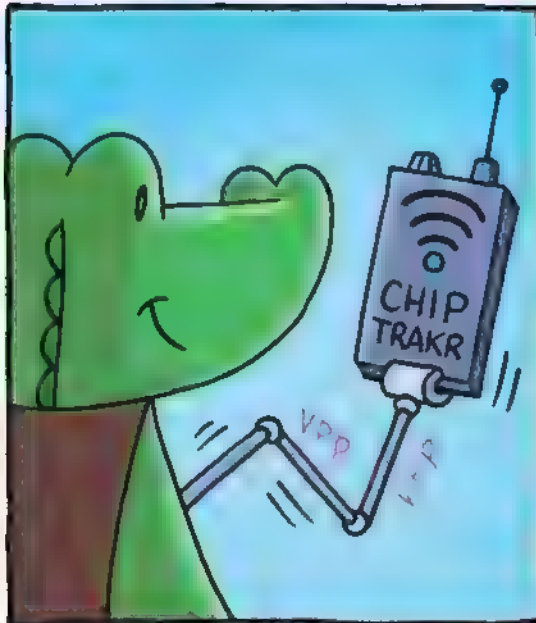




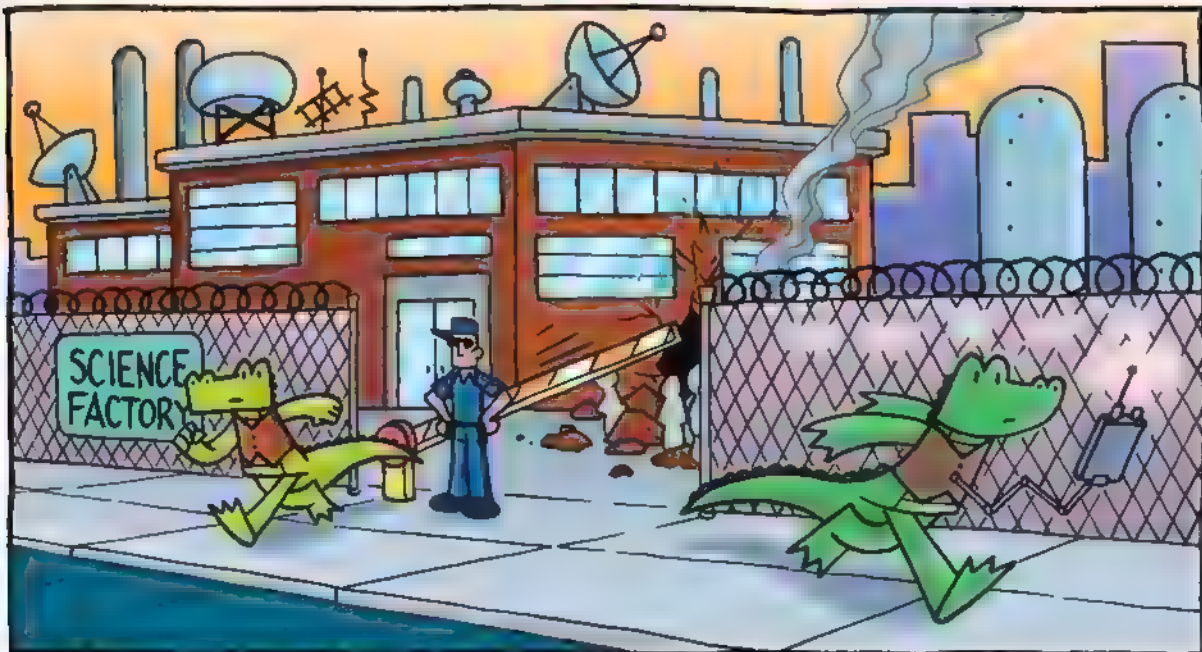




Mango, I'm going to talk to the Head Scientist at the hospital. You follow the trail of cake crumbs.



It's a good thing we baked chocolate microchips into the cake. I can track them with my V.E.S.T.!





Down below...

You have everything you need to rebake me, Gustavo. This next batch better be *perfect*.



I long to be **WHOLE** again.



Y-yes! That's why I used **WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR** this time.



Hmm...
spongy...
durable...



...the crack
is nice and
moist...



Yes... That's a
lovely bake.

Your **SUPER DOUGH** is ready, Chef Mustachio.



PREPARE THE MOLD!



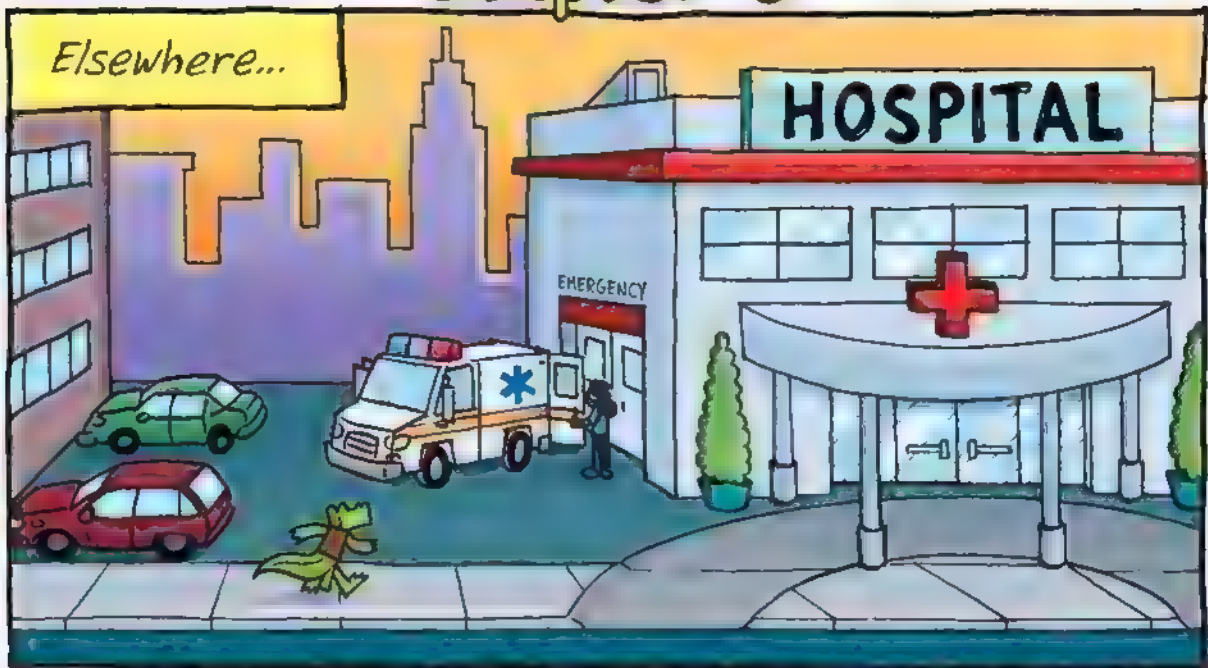
This super dough will make me **harder... better... faster... STRONGER!!**

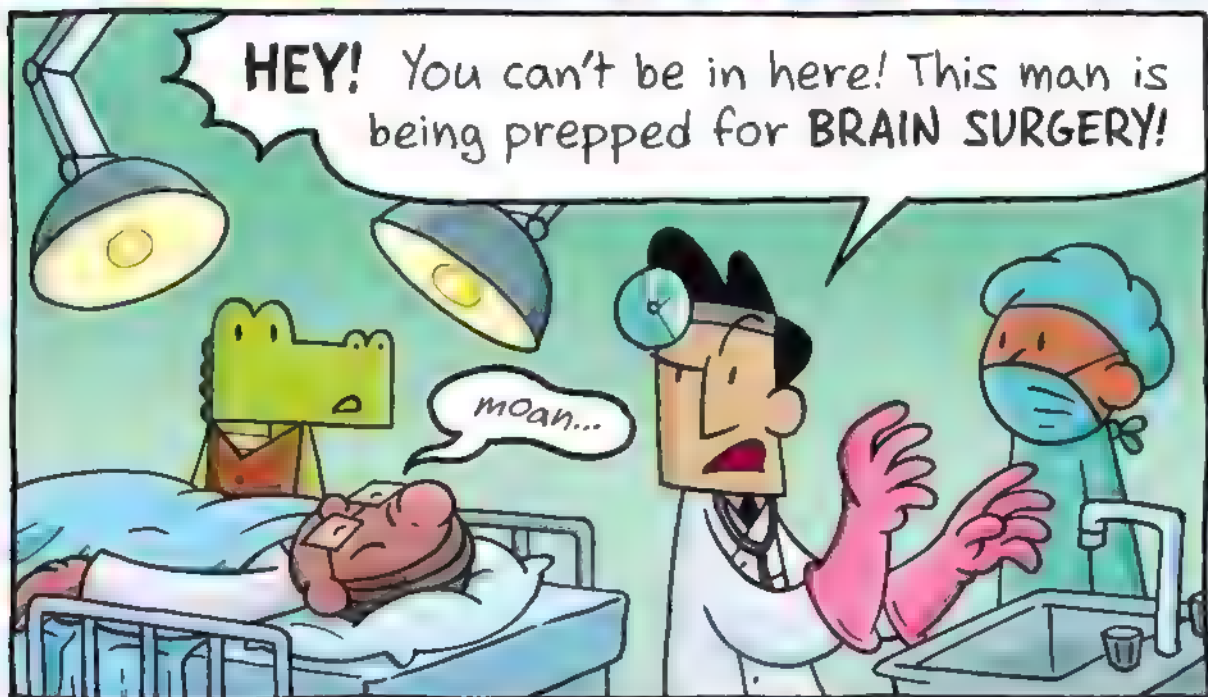
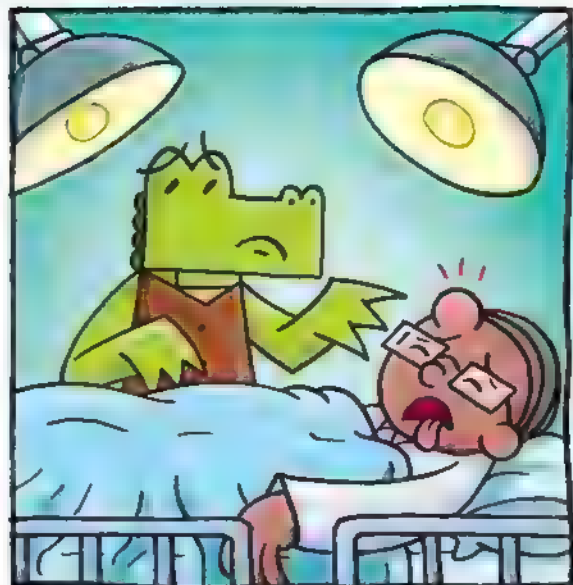
At last I will reveal myself to the Gators.

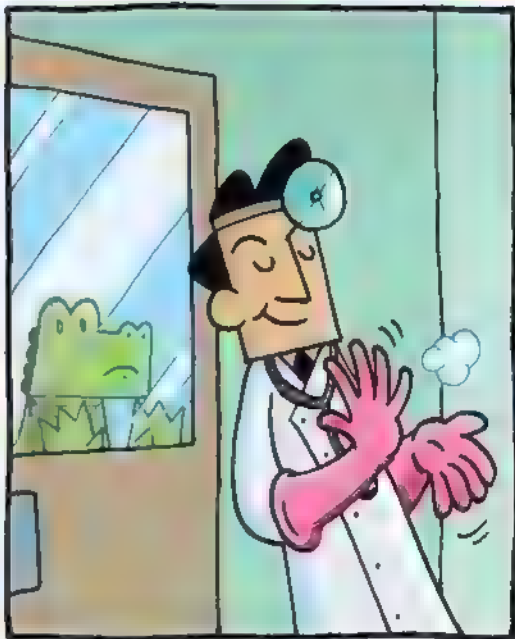
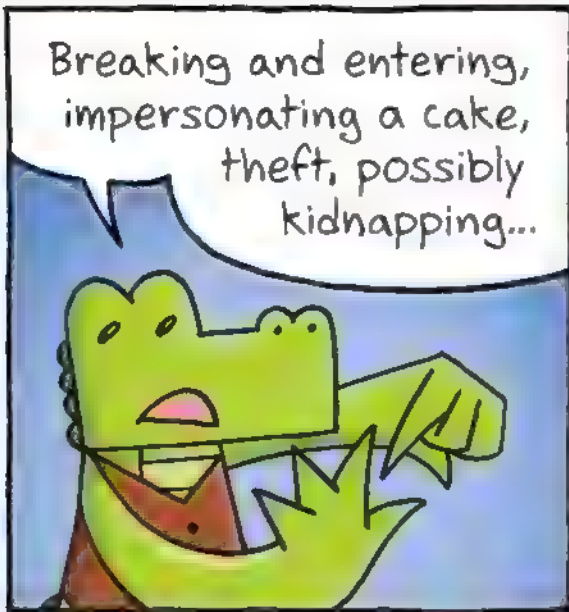
At last I will have **REVENGE!**



Chapter 8



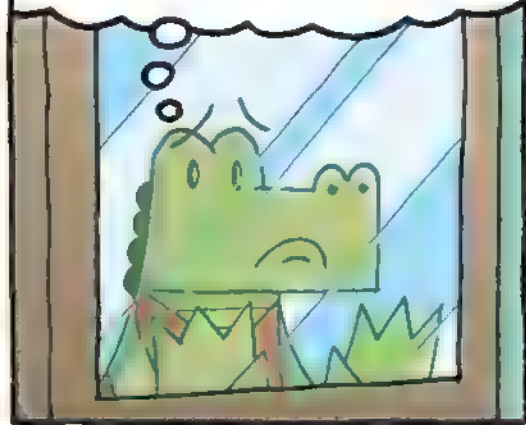




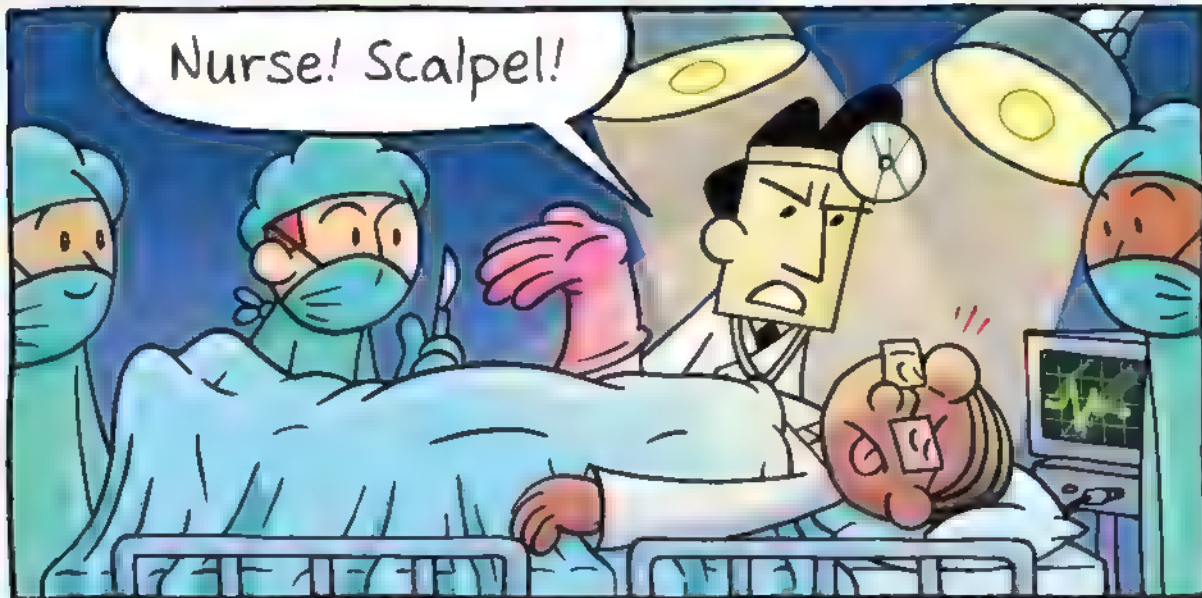
Whoever's behind all this means *business!* I hope Mango's faring better than I am. I don't want him to get hurt...or *worse.*



We haven't been partners for long... but I just can't go through that again!



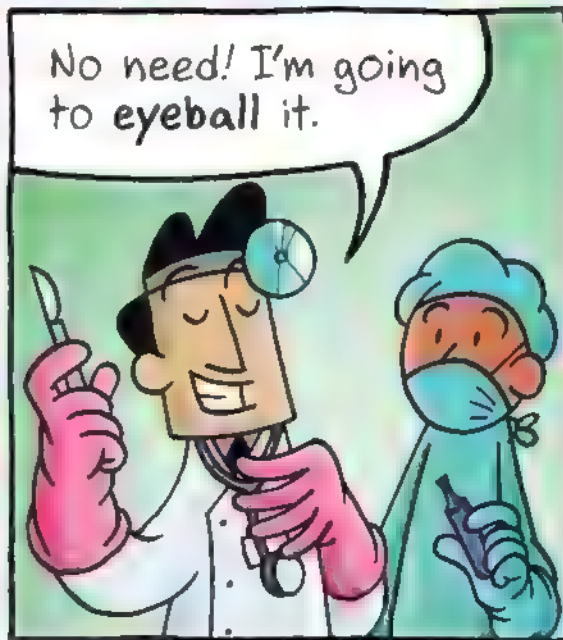
Nurse! Scalpel!

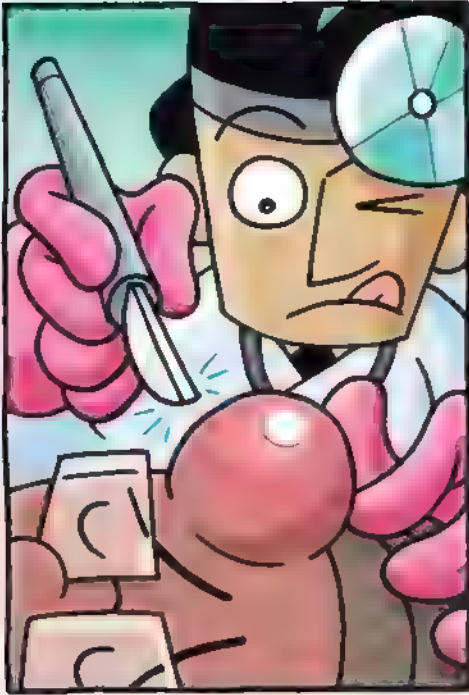


Shall I draw a dotted line to indicate where to make the incision?

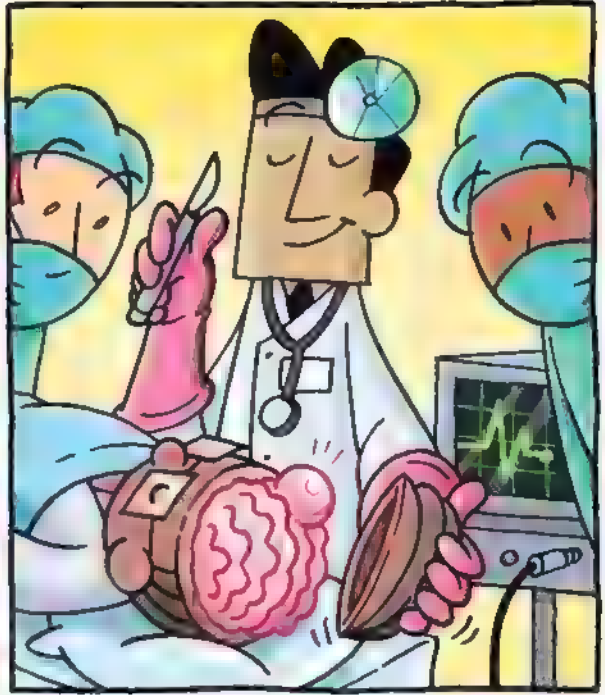


No need! I'm going to eyeball it.

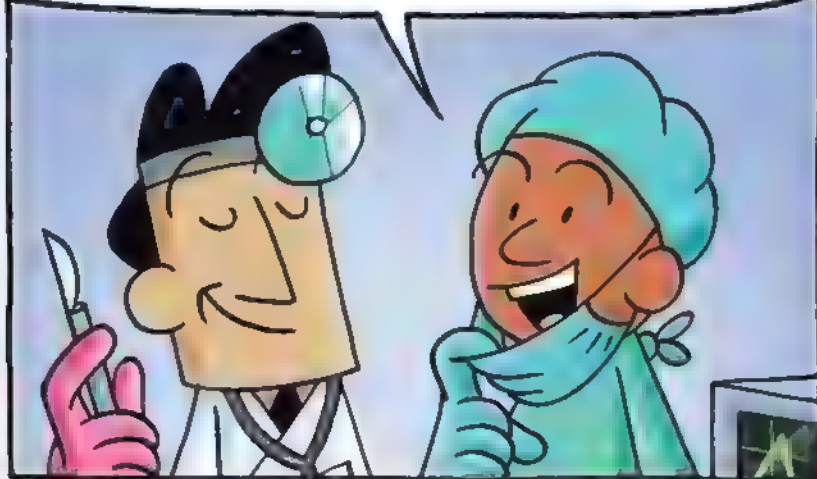




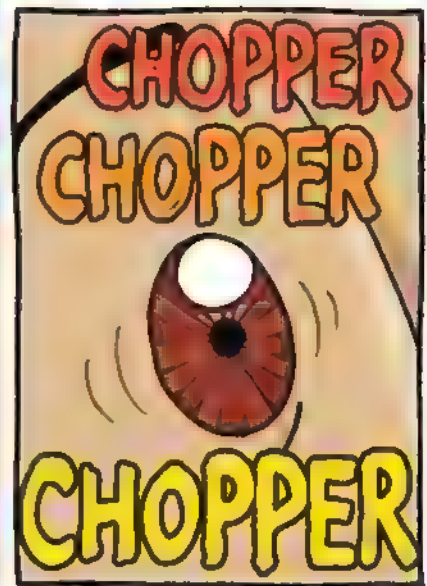
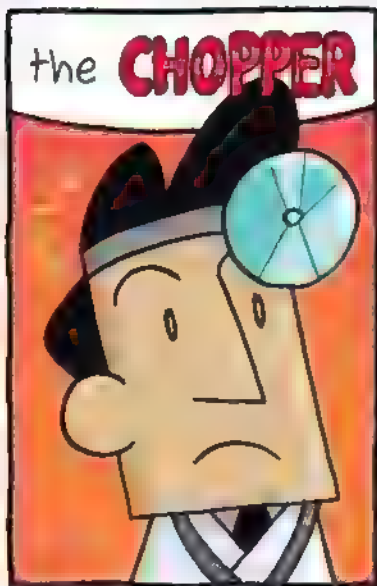
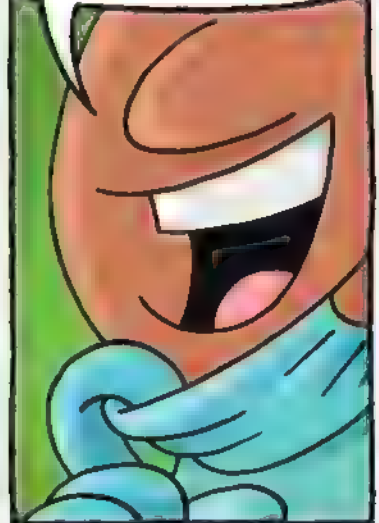
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WOW! You really know how to chop a guy open! They should call you...

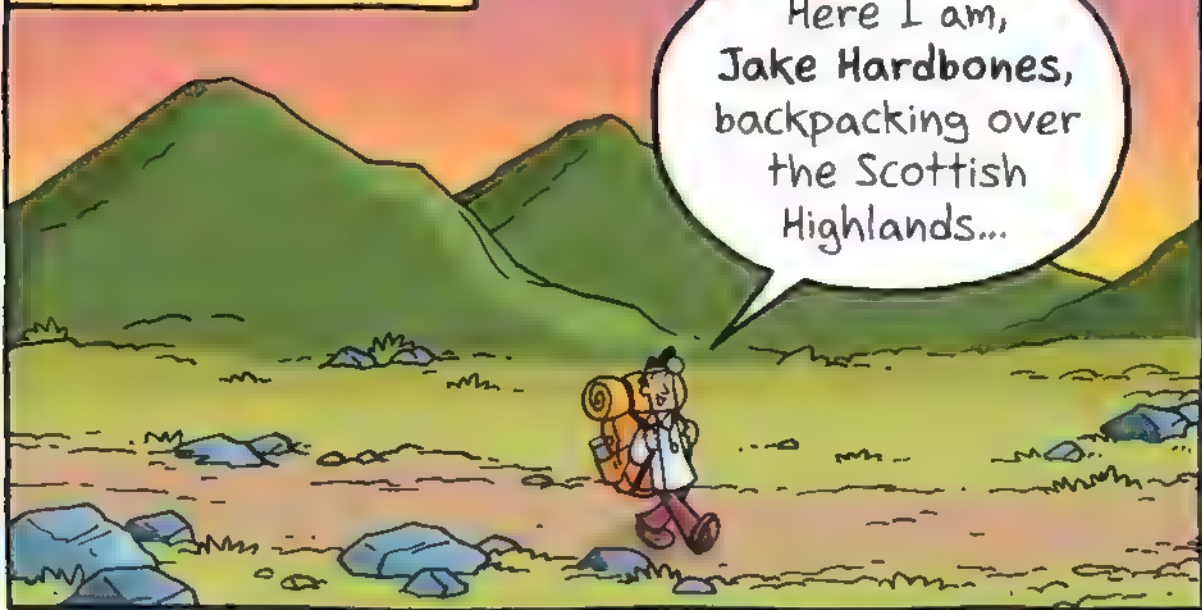


...the **CHOPPER!**



CHOPter 9

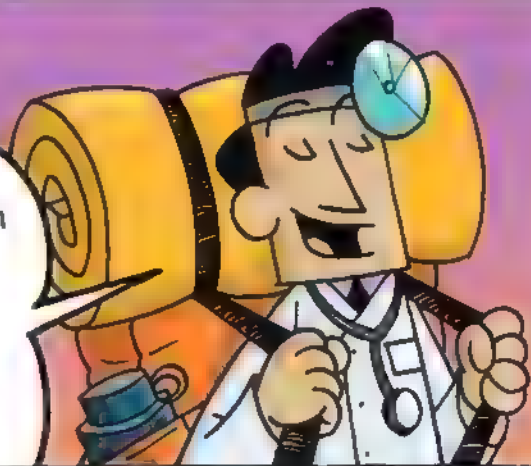
Many moons ago...



Or should I say,

DOCTOR

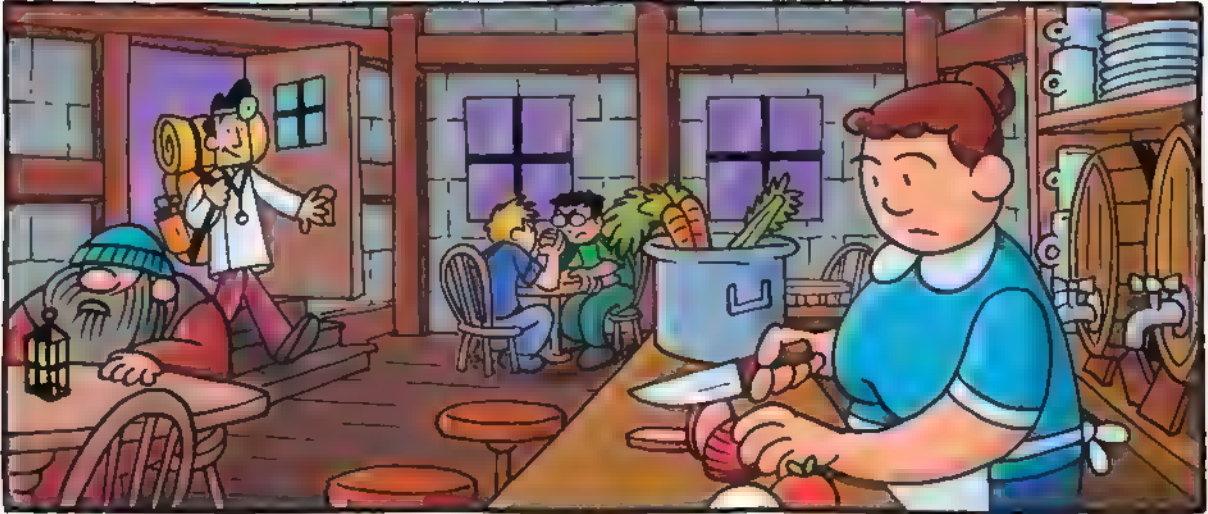
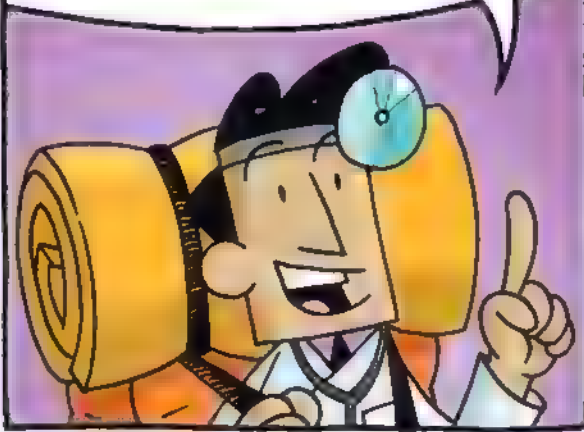
Jake Hardbones, as I'm on vacation in celebration of my graduation from Brain Surgery School!



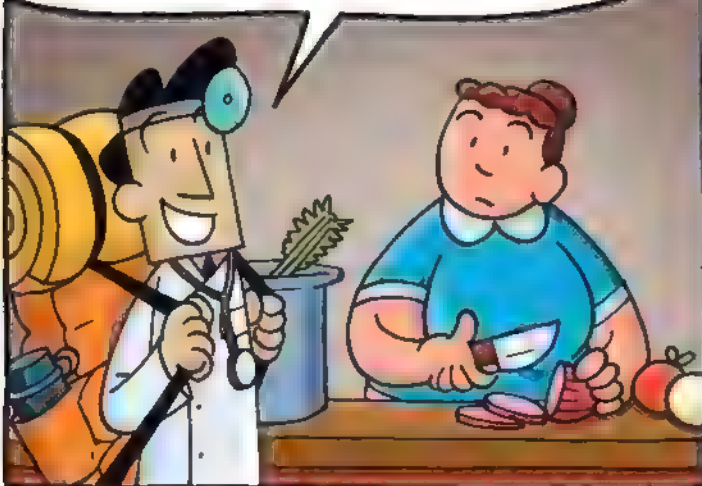
AH! A village! Perhaps the townsfolk will let me pick their brains about any local legends!



Pick their brains! HA HA!
Now that I'm a brain
surgeon, I finally know
what that means!



Hello! I'm not from around
these parts. This seems like
a place with tales to tell.



≡SIGHE Well—

OY!





Ya wanna hear a **STORY**, do ya?
Indeed I do!



Even *more* moons ago... travelers came to this quaint village on a **MACHINE** from the **SKY**!
It was a helicopter.



These beings **PROBED** our minds with their technology!
It was a news crew filming a piece on bed-and-breakfasts.



That part's true.

In the dark of the lunar eclipse they got in their machine and **FLEW OFF**, never to be seen again!

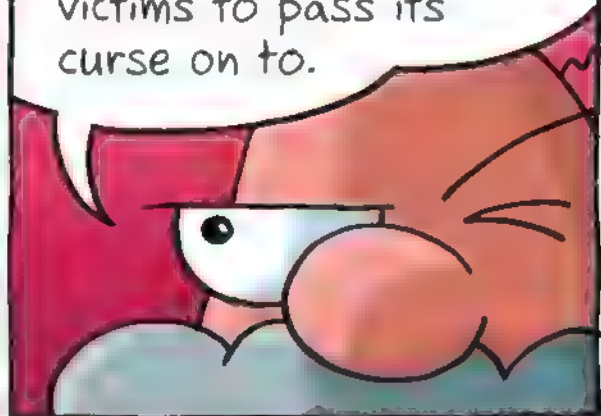
They were here maybe twenty minutes.



But on nights like this, their **FLYING DEVIL** can still be heard...



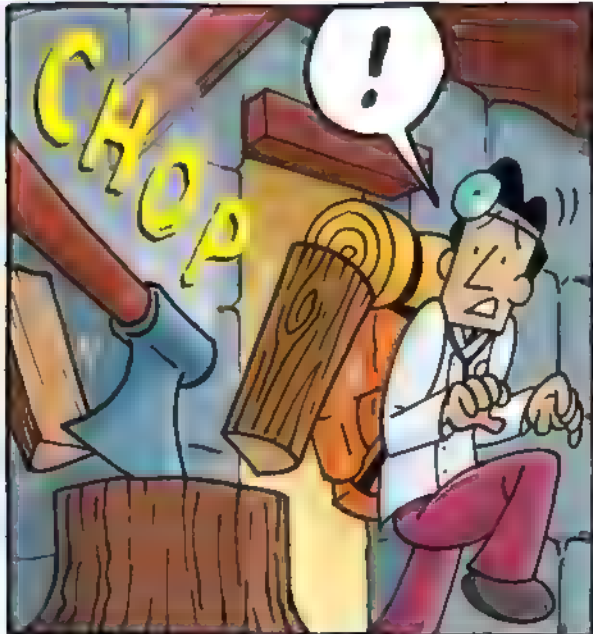
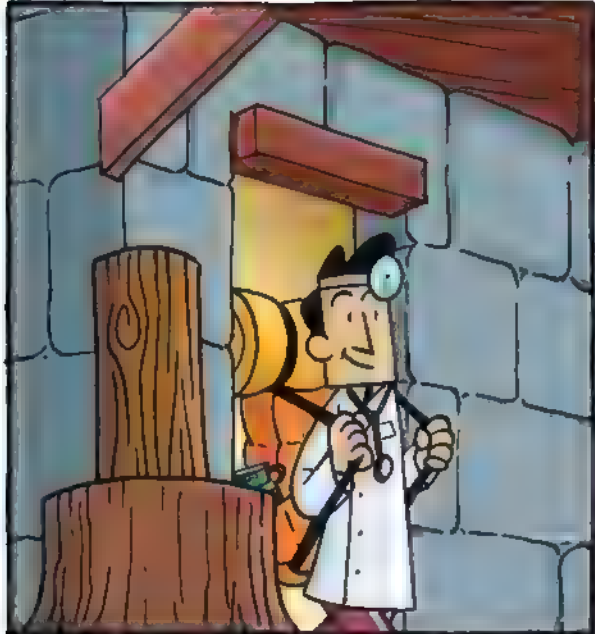
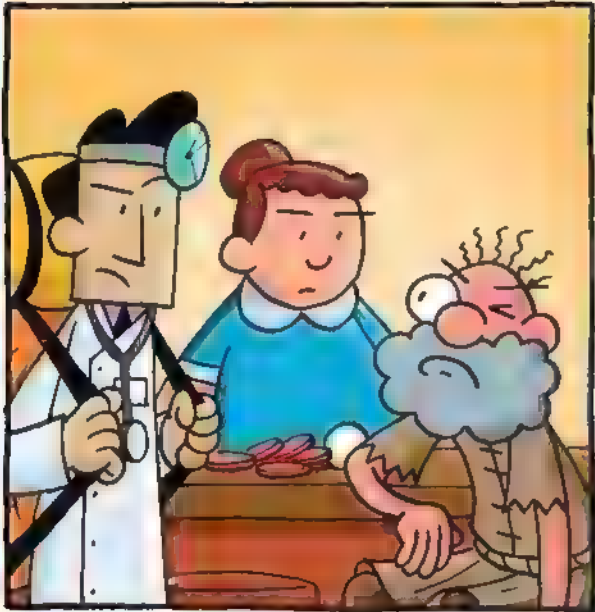
And **SOME** say it haunts the hillside waiting for victims to pass its curse on to.



Who says that?

I do. I say it. I said it just now. Weren't you listening?



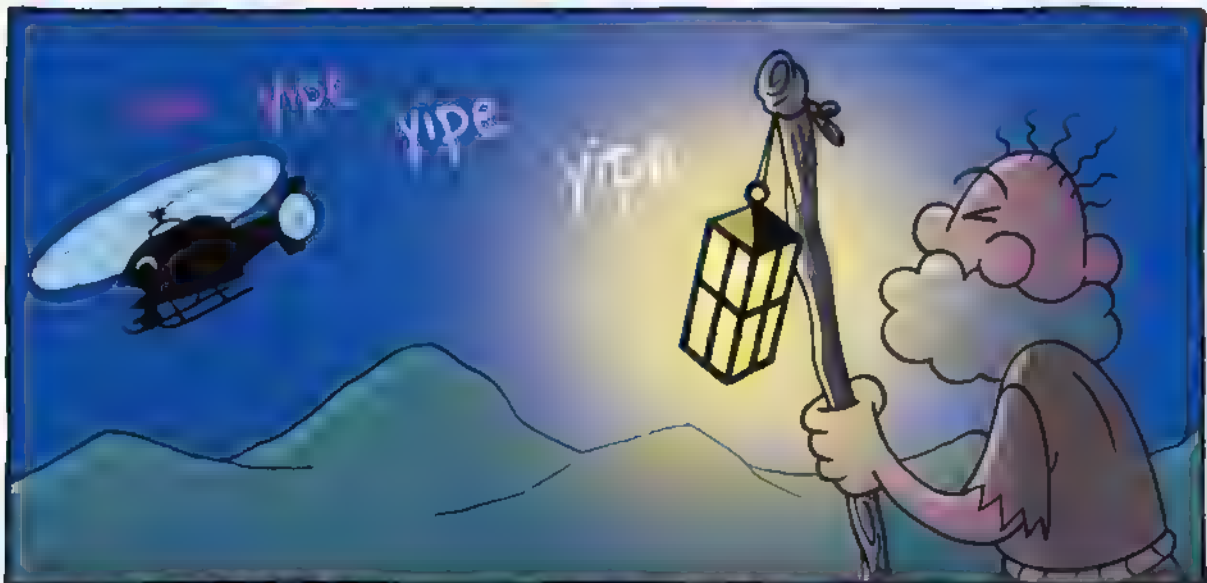
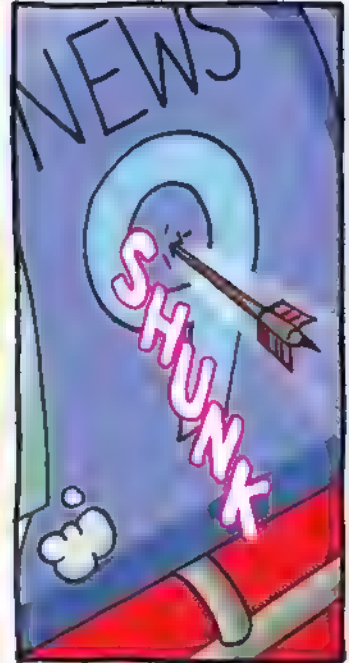






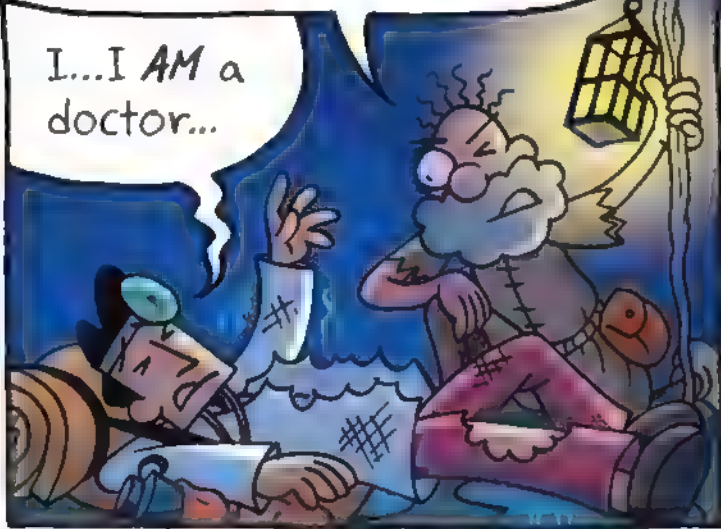
**C
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P**

AAAAAGH!

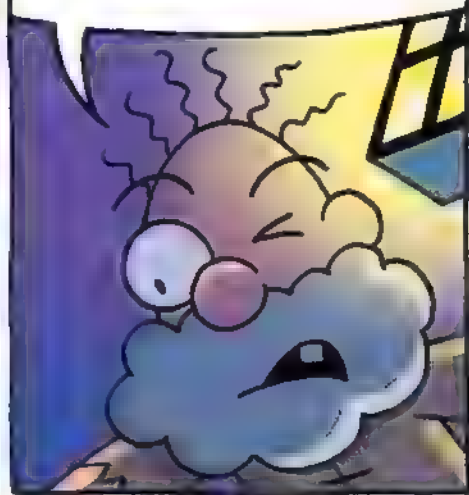


You were bitten pretty bad, son. You need a doctor.

I...I **AM** a doctor...



Not just a doctor anymore. You're a WERE-COPTER now.



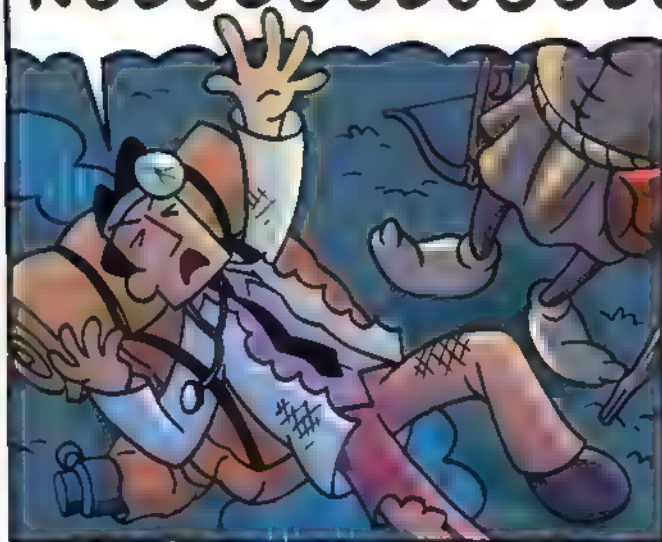
That machine's curse is coursing through your veins. And that's **bad news**. Now, whenever there **IS** news, you will be forced to transform into a news copter to report on it. You have become...



...**DOCTOR COPTER!**

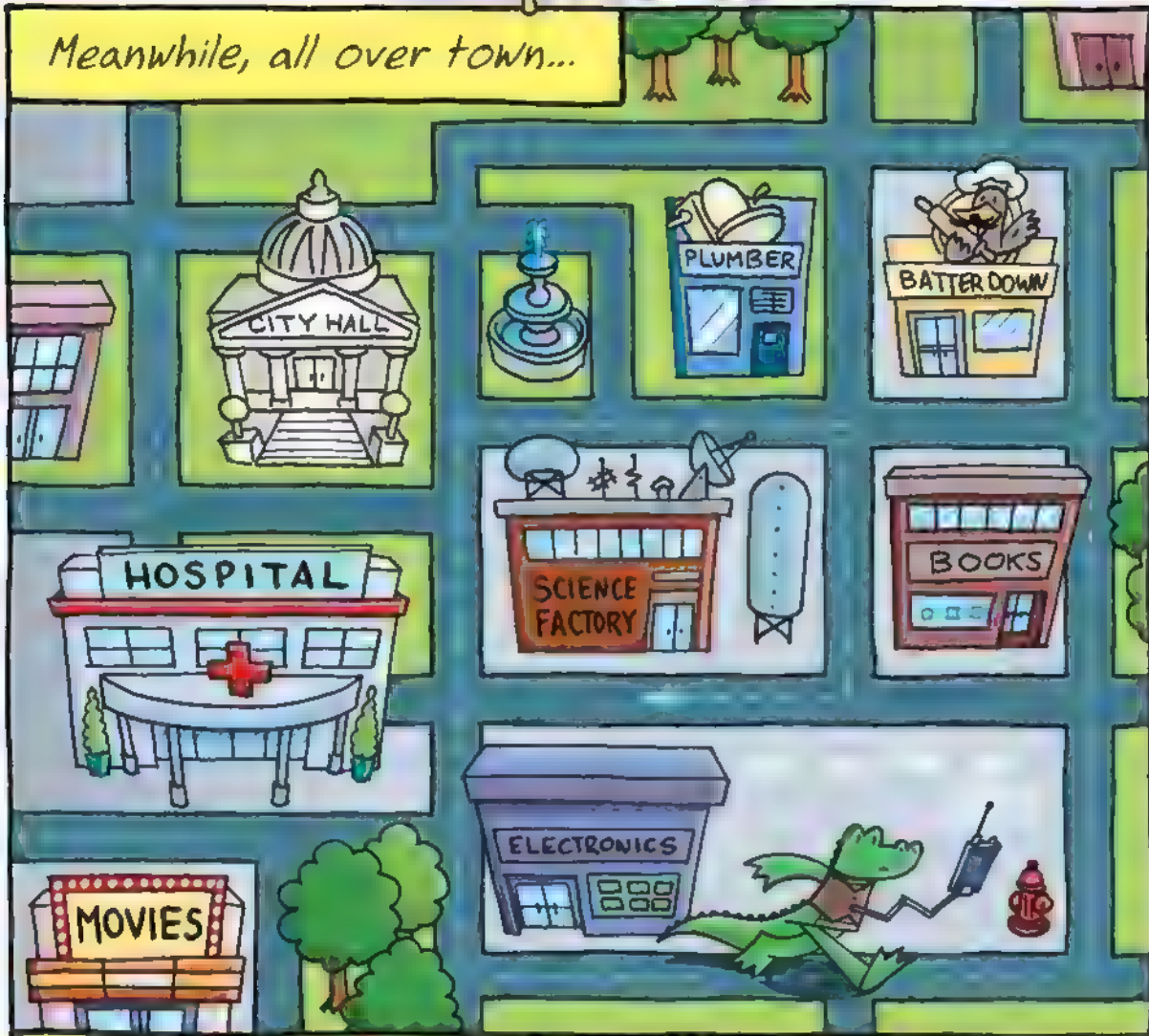


Nooooooooooooooooooooo



Chapter 10

Meanwhile, all over town...



...Mango is tracking the chocolate microchips.



Man, wherever this culprit went, they sure took the long way to get there!





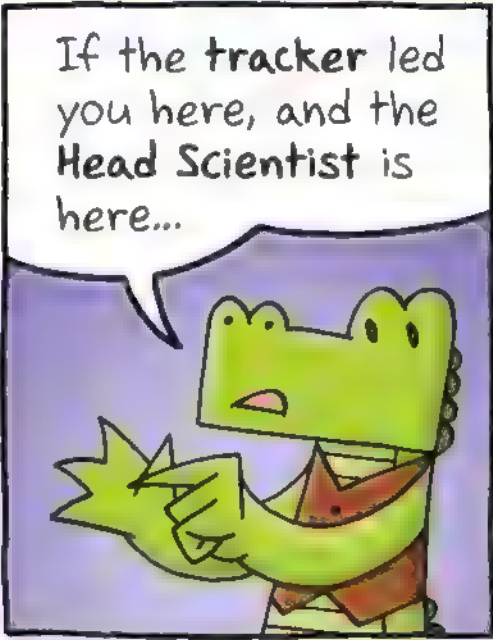
You're supposed to be following the cake crumbs!

I did! The signal led me right here!

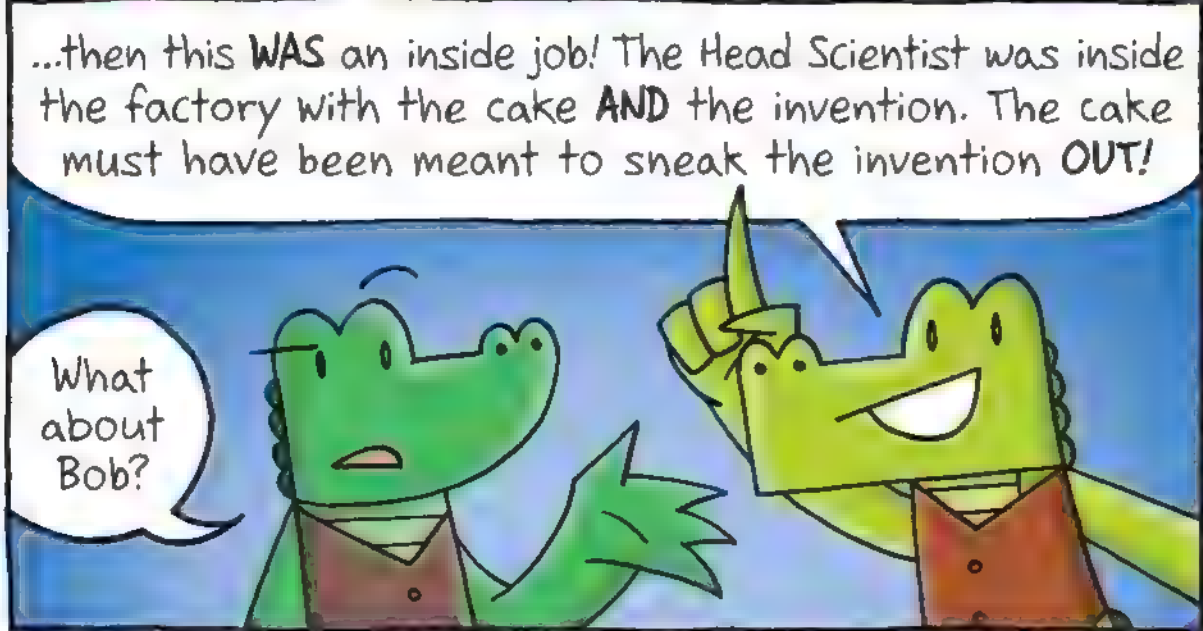


Well, not right here. It led me all over town—

Hold up!



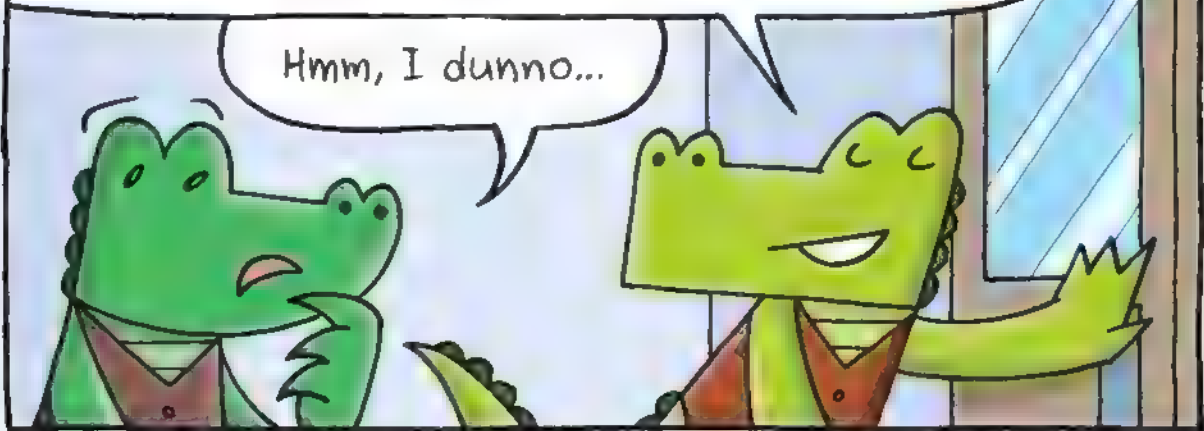
If the tracker led you here, and the Head Scientist is here...



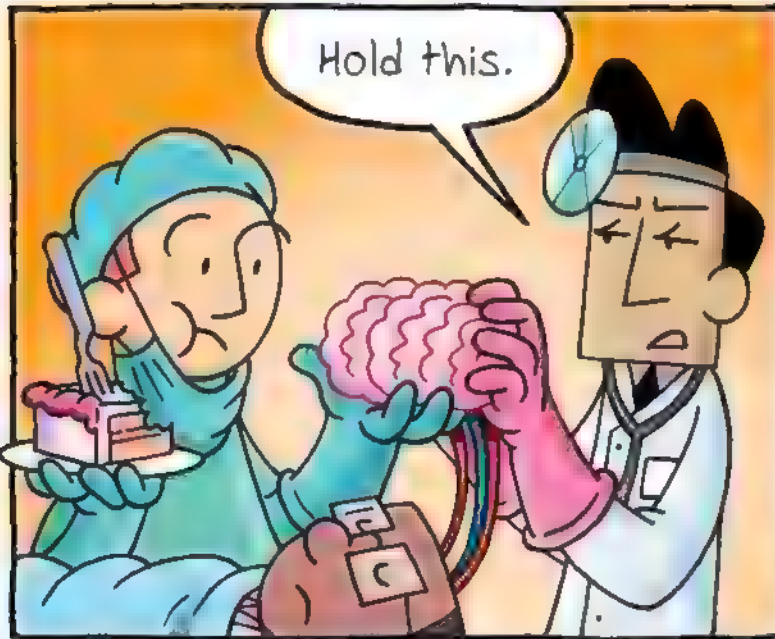
...then this **WAS** an inside job! The Head Scientist was inside the factory with the cake **AND** the invention. The cake must have been meant to sneak the invention **OUT**!

What about Bob?

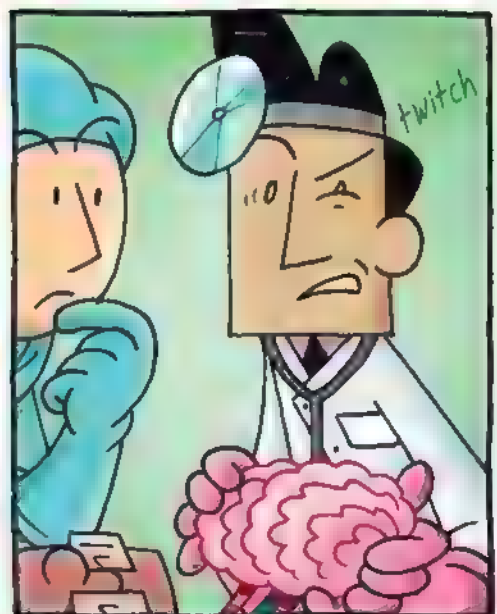
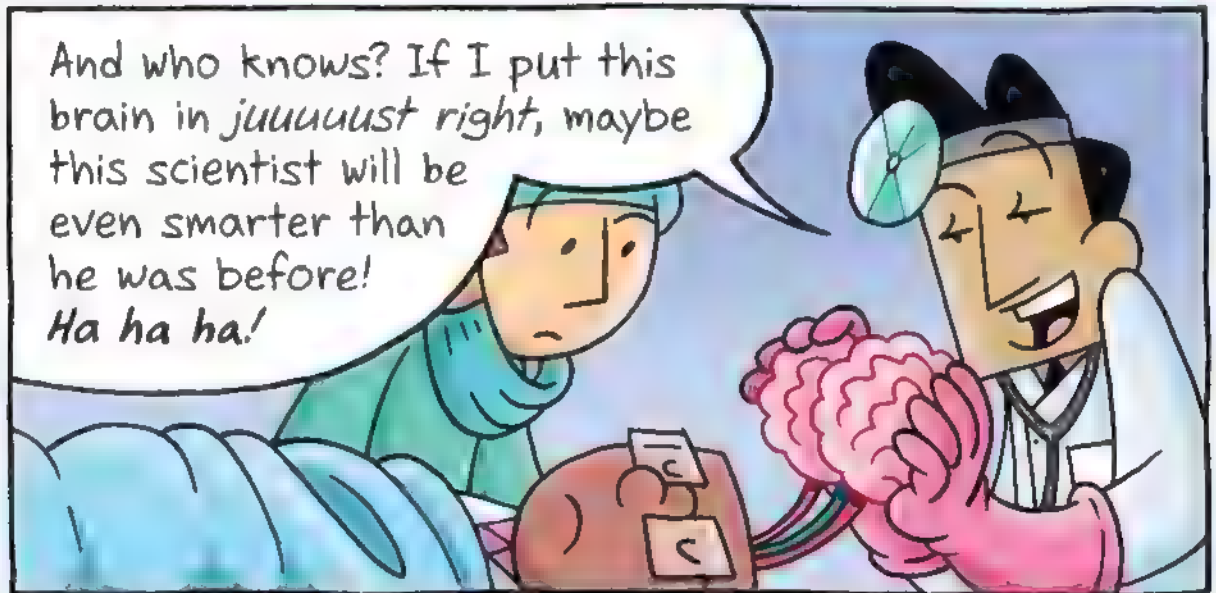
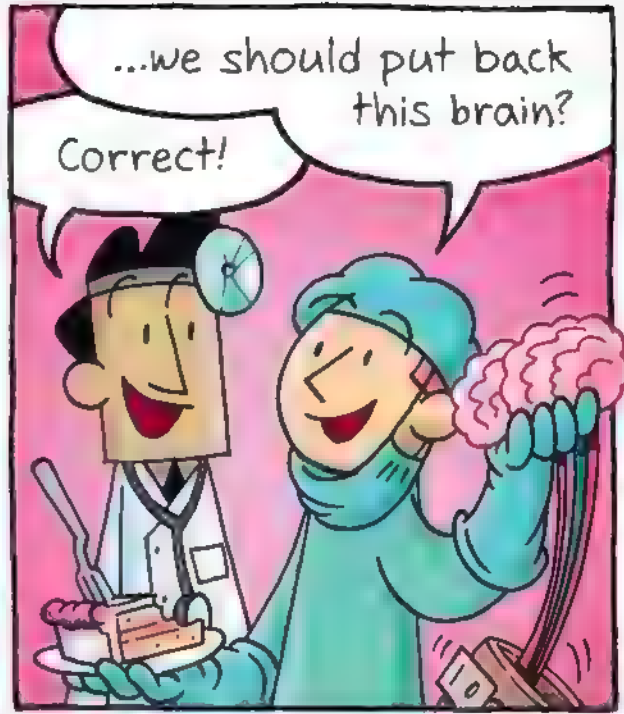
Bob was **clearly** his partner, who double-crossed him, set off the explosion as a distraction, and made off with the invention for *himself!*













Let's get back to the bakery and watch this news footage!

SURGERY >>>



Brash...? What's wrong?



Mango... This investigation has me worried that something bad is going to happen.

At the bakery?



Brash, we're partners. I trust you with my life. So whatever you think will happen—

Mango.



The last time I went undercover at a bakery... my partner...

...**DIED.**

I lost one partner. And now...
I'm afraid of losing another.

I'm so sorry, Brash. I didn't know...
But *fear* is no reason to give up.

We're Investi**GATORS!**
Not Investi**QUITTERS!**

You won't lose me,
and I won't lose you!

You may think you've hit
rock bottom, but you
can go even lower...

...into the *sewer!*

Now let's flush ourselves
down the nearest toilet
and **GATOR DONE!**



Speaking of the sewer...

Um... If you don't mind me asking, how'd you get like this?

I DO MIND!



But now that you mention it, maybe my origin story will help you with your task.



I wasn't always a tasty treat. But I always had a taste... for **JUSTICE**.



I was once a good guy, Gustavo. A crocodile named Daryl. But then... a catastrophe changed all that!

What happened?

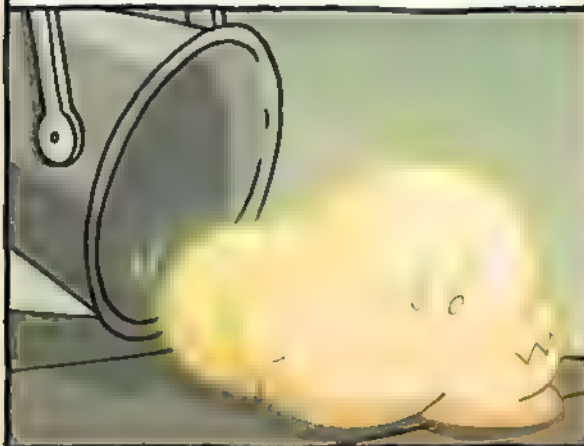
I was once a good guy, Gustavo. A crocodile named Daryl. But then... a catastrophe changed all that!

I fell into into a vat of radioactive cracker dough.

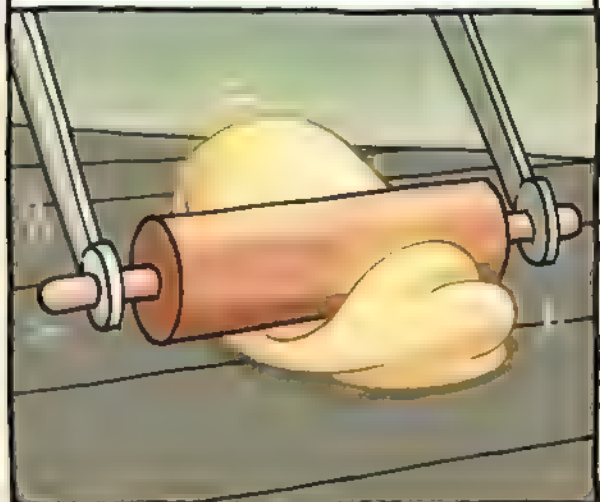


I thought I was going to die.

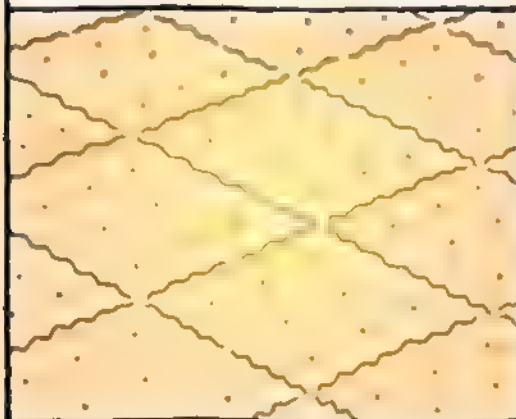
Instead, I became one with the dough.



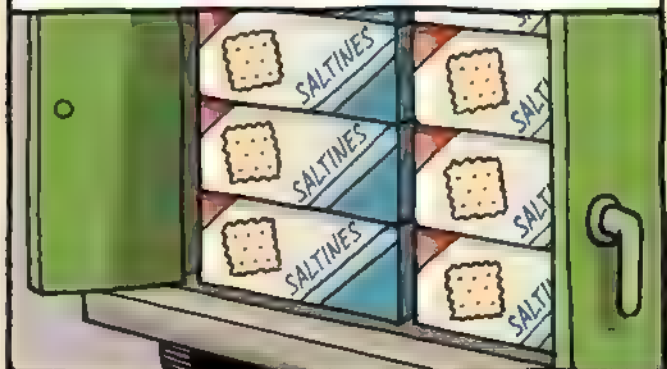
Machines rolled me out...



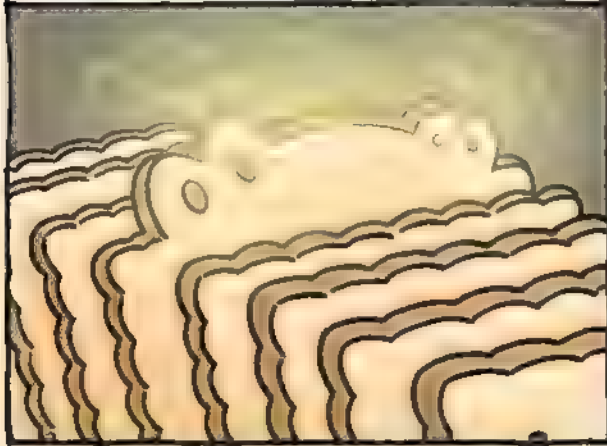
...and baked me into individual saltines.



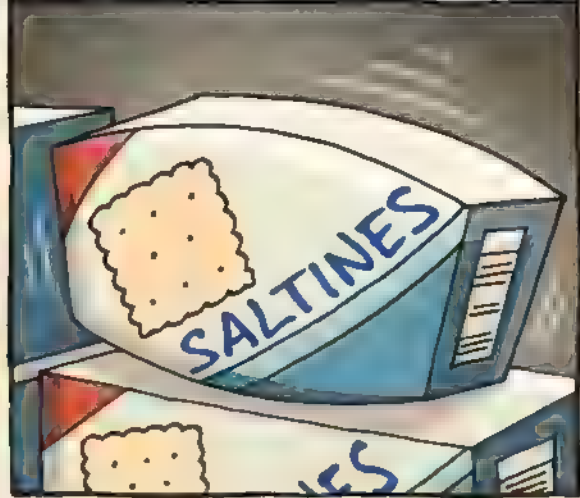
Then I was packaged, put on a truck, and shipped off to who knows where.



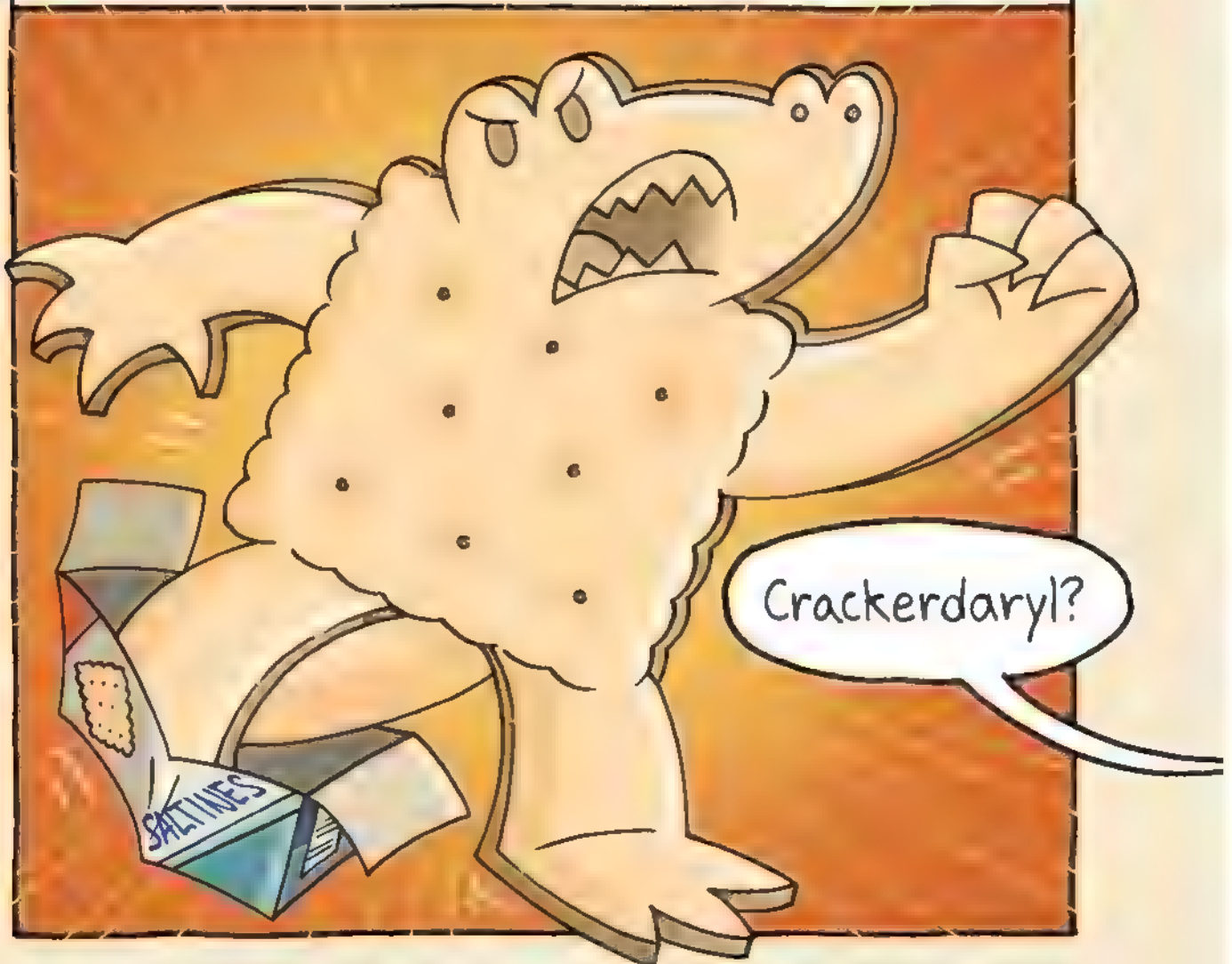
Inside the box I felt myself growing, thanks to the radiation.

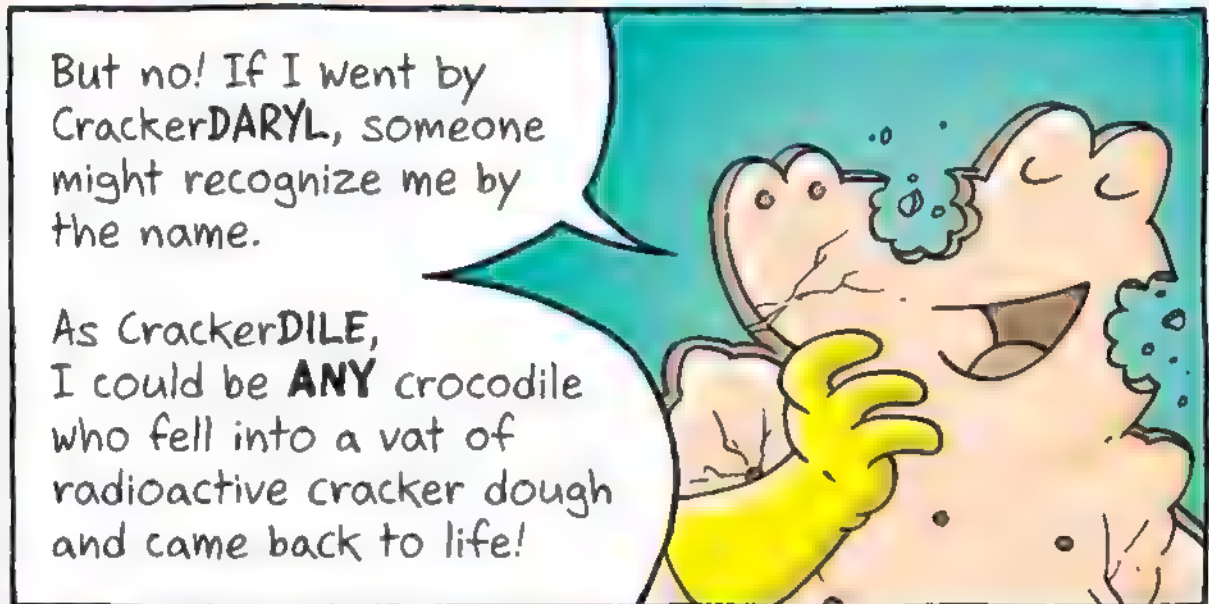


Or maybe it was the rapid-rise yeast.



I combined with all the other *me* crackers and **BURST** through that vacuum seal, forevermore to be known as—





Life since my evolution hasn't been kind.

The transformation may have granted me the strength of a giant saltine...

...but it also made me **weak** to moisture and hungry vermin.

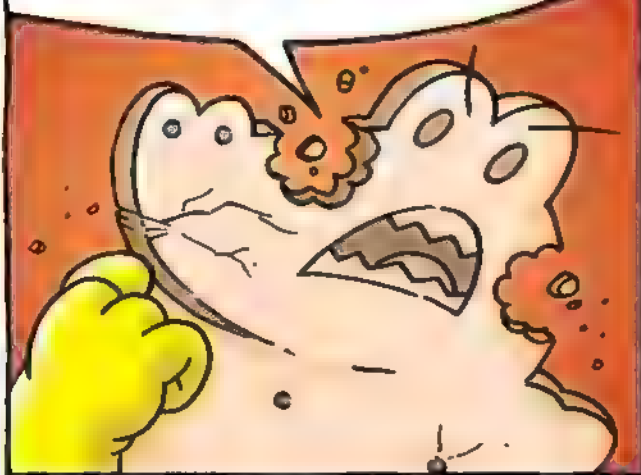


Then why do you live in the sewer? It's full of both moisture **AND** vermin!

I might be the crumbling remains of a **cracker** on the outside...



...but I'm still a **crocodile** on the inside!

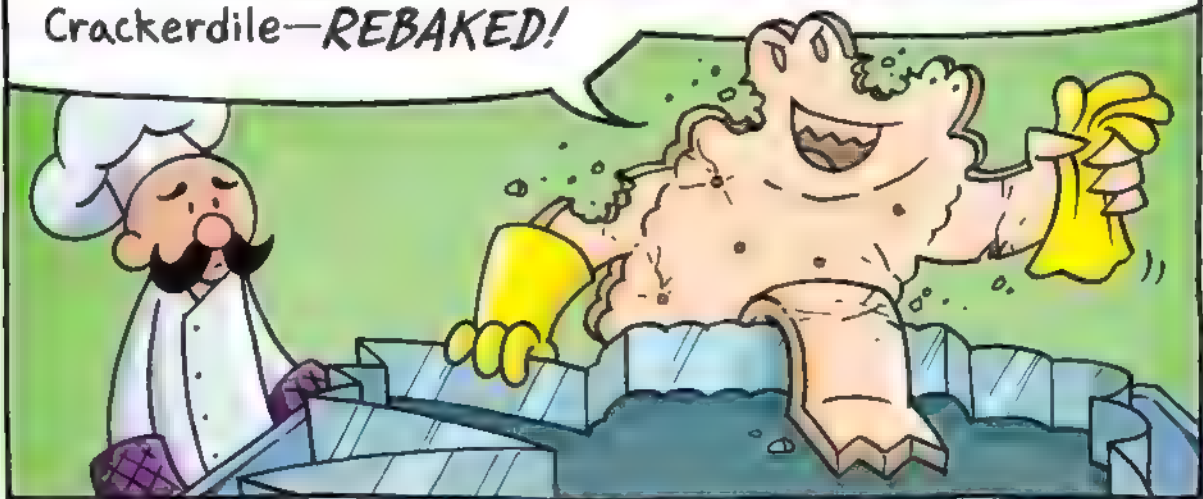


Well, you will crumble no more after you get inside...



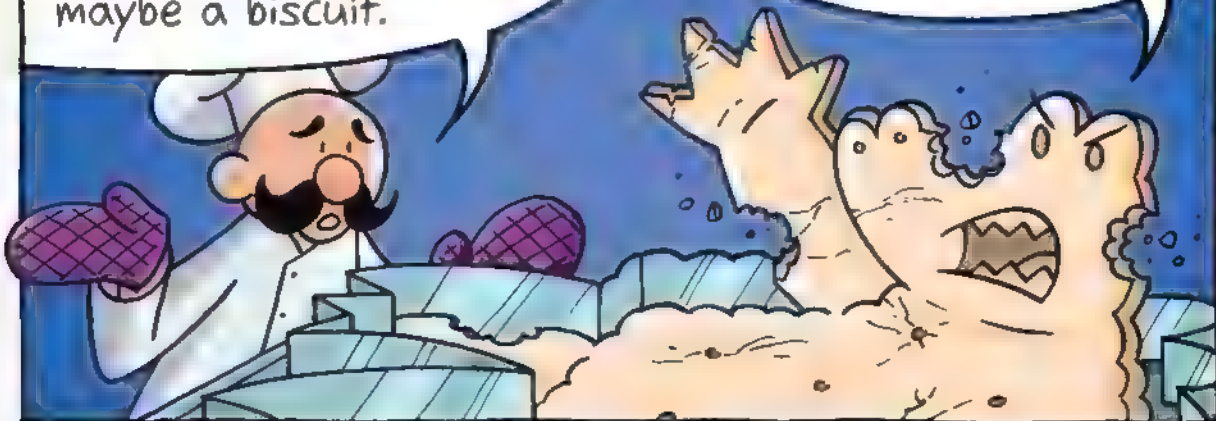


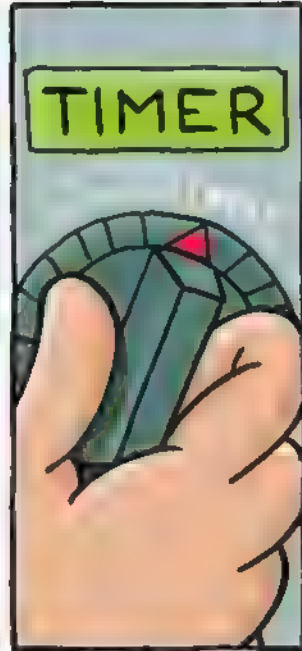
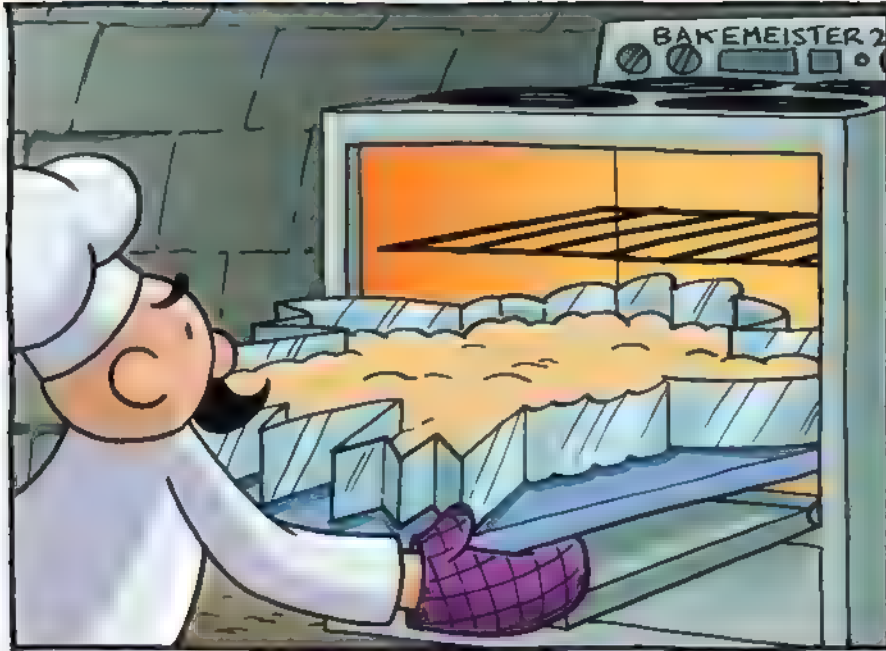
With your **SUPER DOUGH**, I'll be invincible! Soon the world will bask in the fresh-from-the-oven heat of Crackerdile—**REBAKED!**



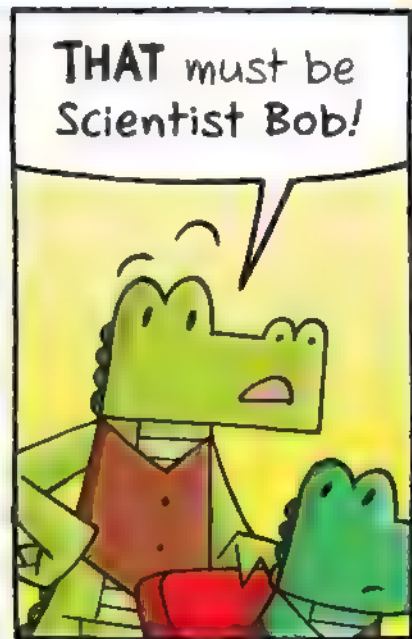
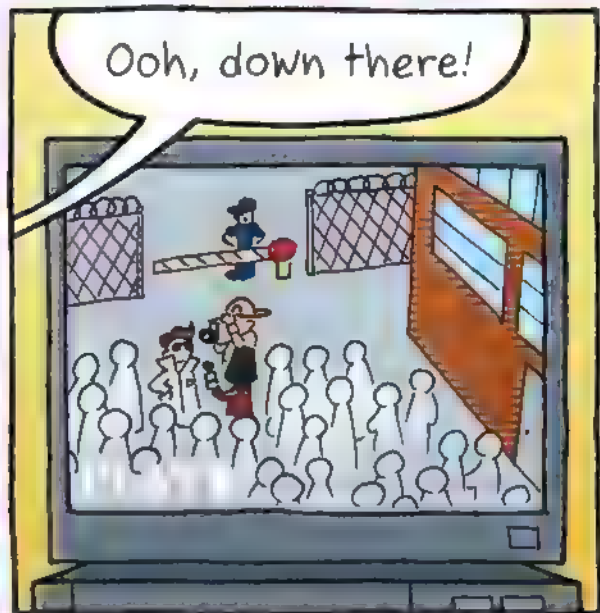
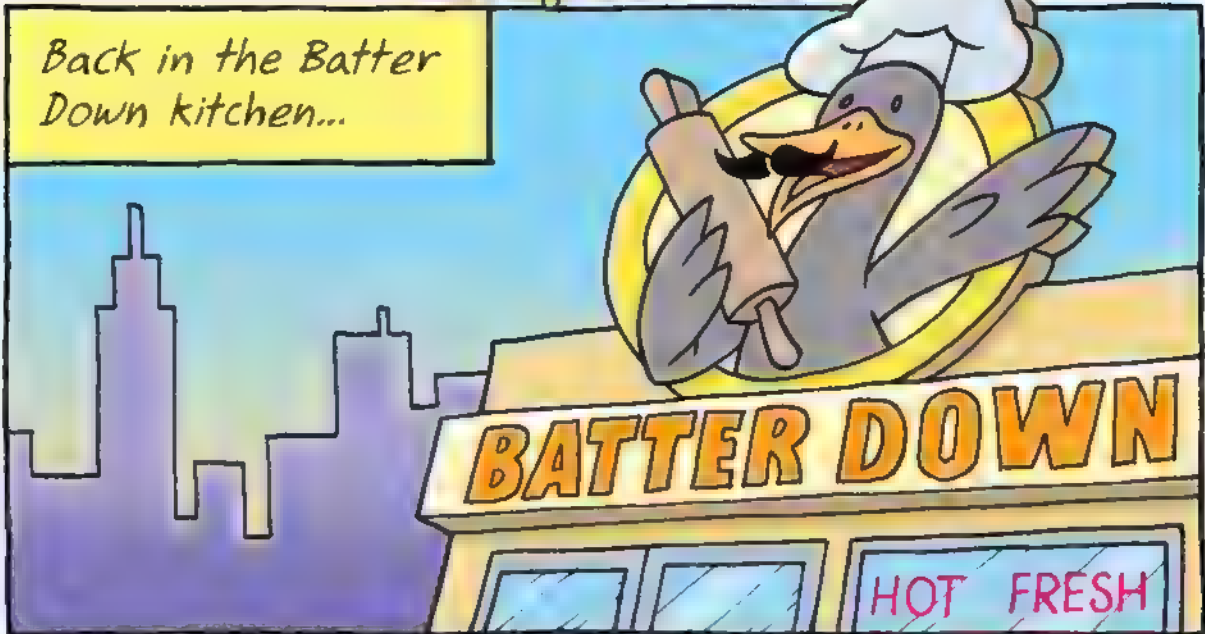
This will make you more of a cookie, really. Or maybe a biscuit.

Just get on with it, Mustachio!

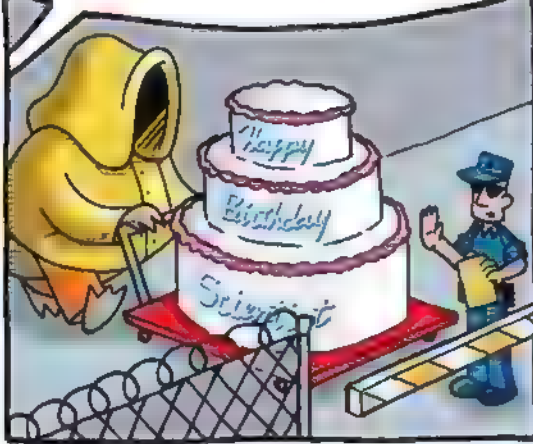




Chapter 11



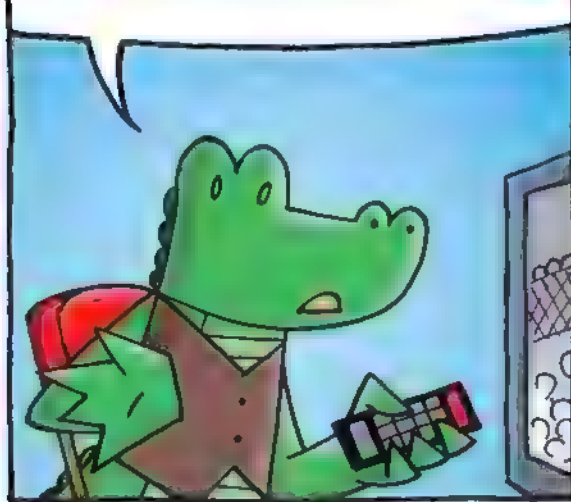
Then the cake and the guy who ordered it show up.



Now that I think about it, why was he in a raincoat when the sun was out?



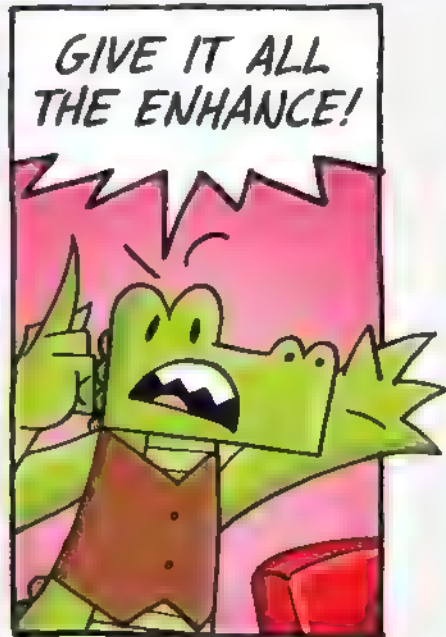
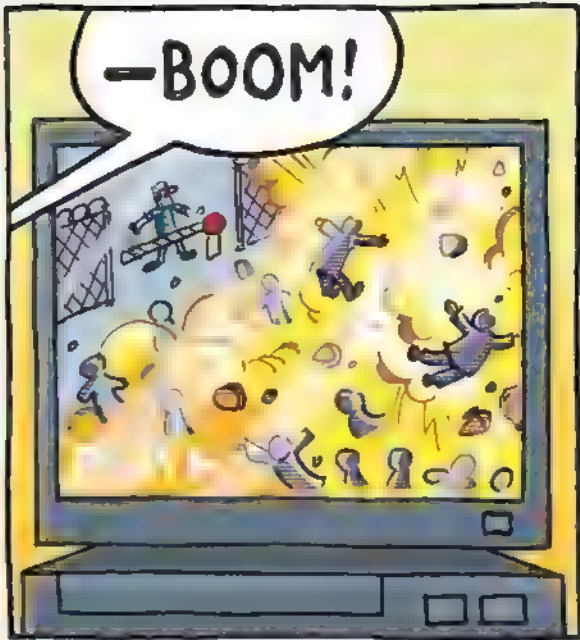
And then the guard wheels the cake inside.



WAIT! GO BACK. **ENHANCE!**











Junior Assistant Baker Marie! Where's the store copy of the receipt for that giant birthday cake?

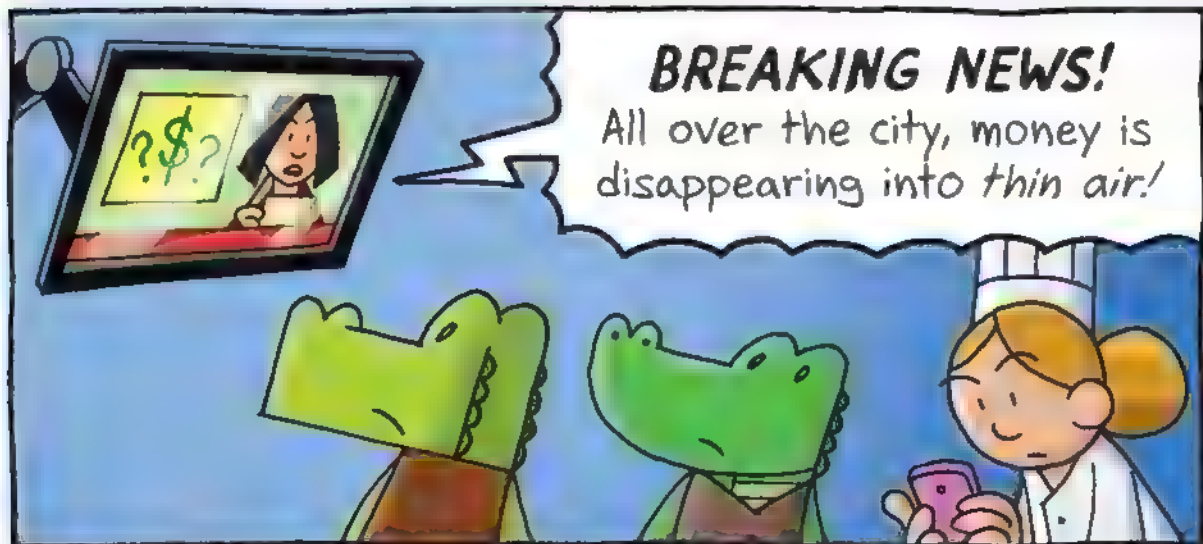


Here.



If he paid with a credit card, we can track where else he's been!

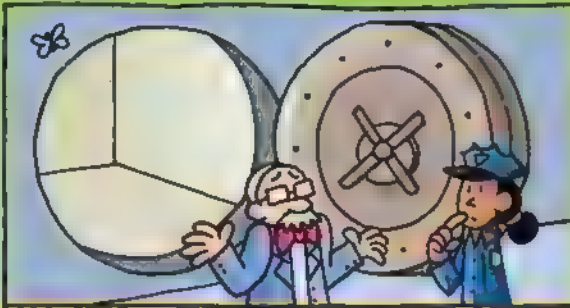
Drat! He paid cash! How are we going to find him?



BREAKING NEWS!
All over the city, money is disappearing into thin air!

This is Cici Boringstories in the *Action News Now* studio!

The city's banks are **EMPTY!**



MONEY GO BYE-BYE



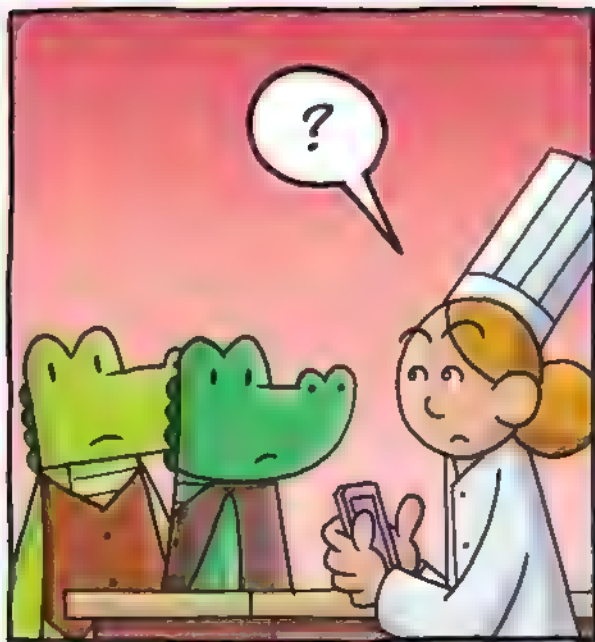
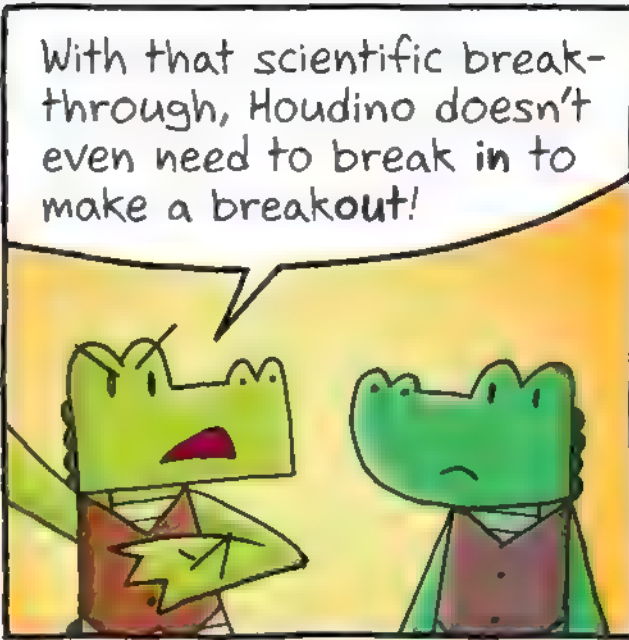
ING REPORT — ACTION NEWS NOW — BREAKING REPORT — AC

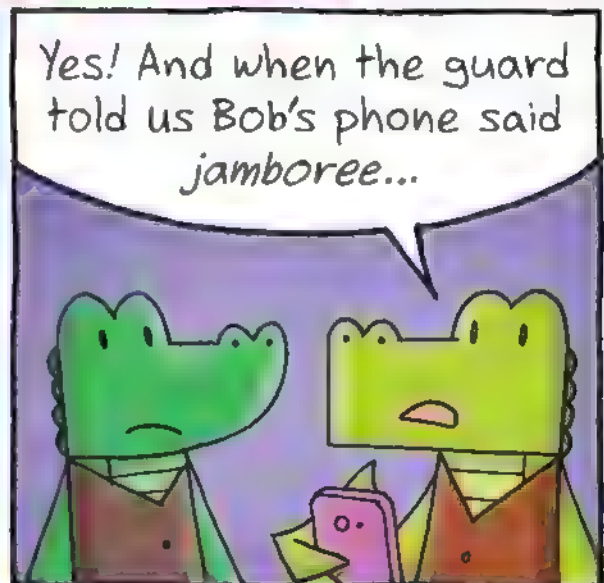
One minute the money was there, the next it was gone. *Poof!* It's like someone has a laser beam that can suck up money through walls!



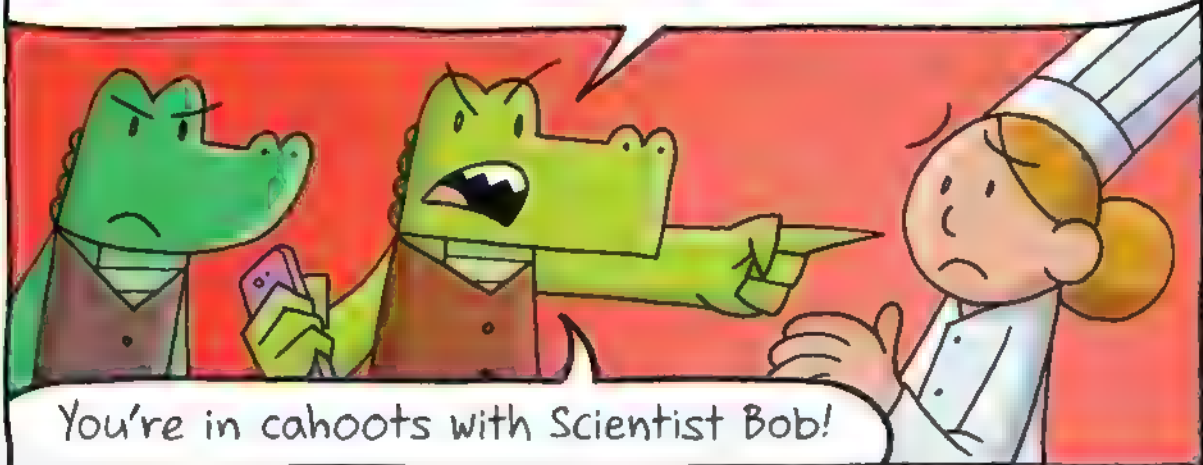
One thing's for sure: If your money's in a safe, your money *ISN'T SAFE!*







...what he actually saw was the name *JABMarie!*
Bob was talking to **Junior Assistant Baker Marie!**



You're in cahoots with Scientist Bob!



What's he need the oven for?

Oven? What are you talking about?



The **BIG** oven is missing!

Medium oven.



We have, like, **SO** many ovens. You can't expect me to notice if one is missing.

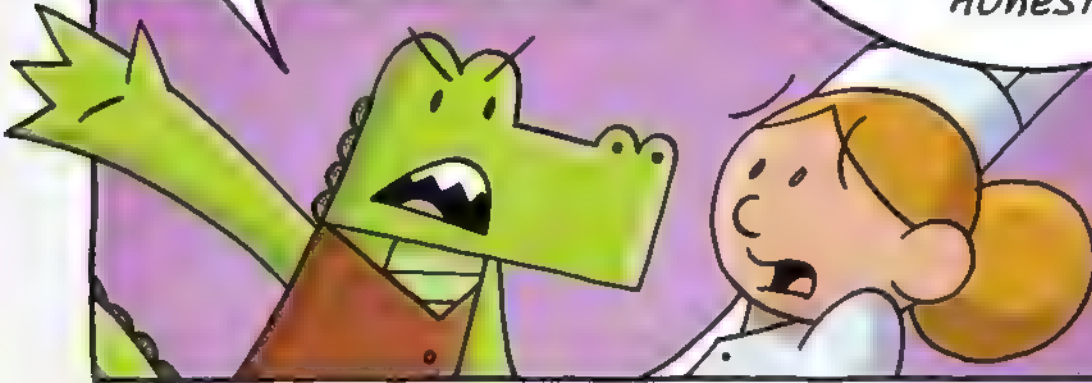


You only had **THREE!**

And for some people, they're very easy to tell apart!

FORGET THAT! WHERE'S HOUDINO? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH GUSTAVO?

I know nuttin' about no Houdino! And Gustavo... It was just an accident! *Honest!*

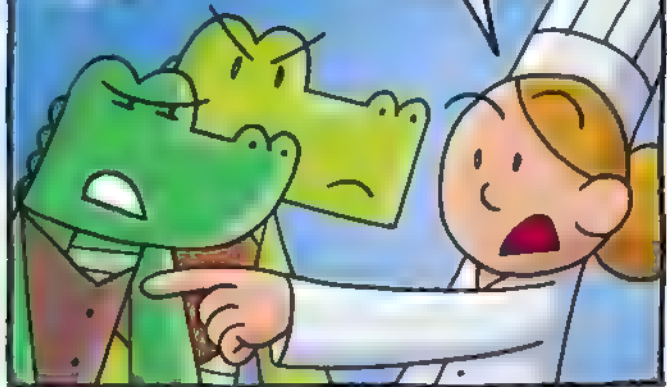


We... We saw him fall down a manhole. And instead of calling for help...we did nothing.



What do you mean, "WE"?

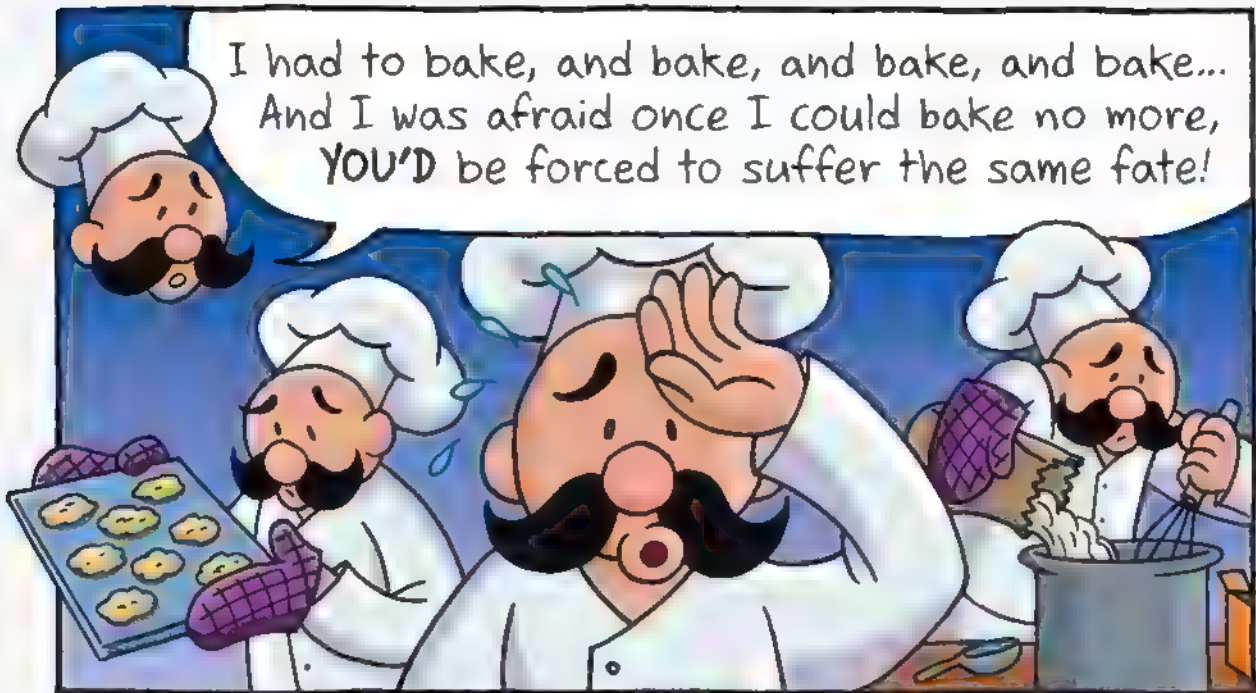
GUSTAVO!



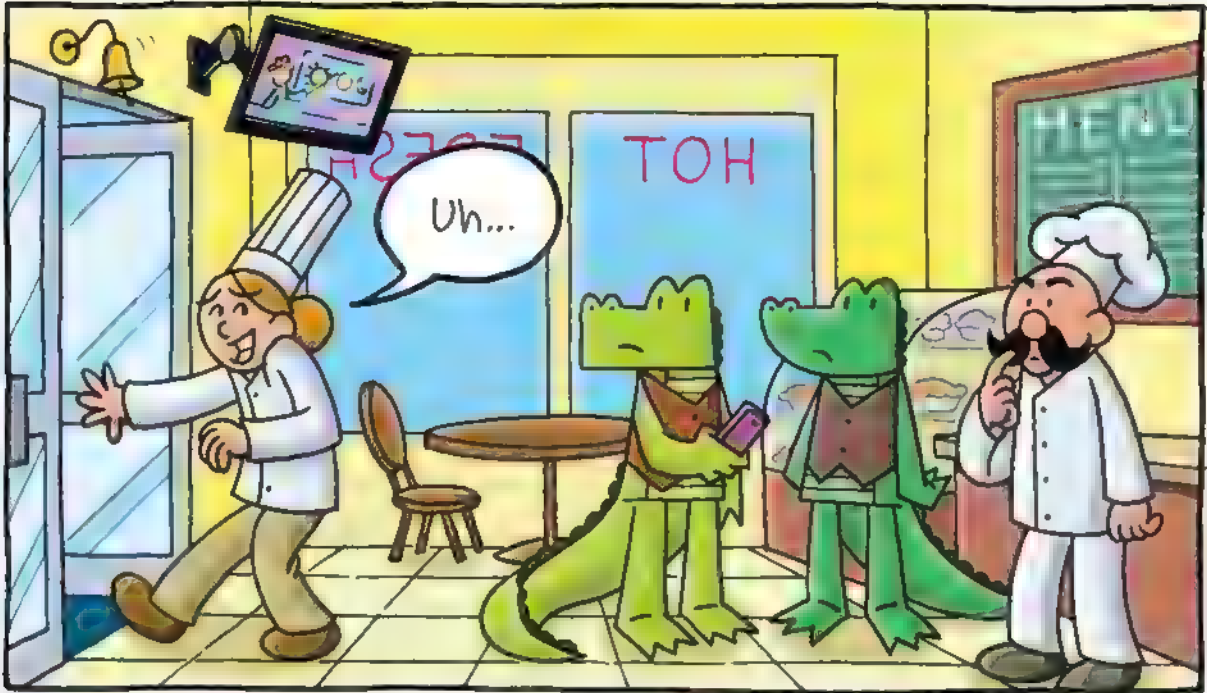
It's-a me!











Bob was tired of living in Chef Mustachio's mushadow. We wanted to start our own bakery together!



But **GUSTAVO** keeps all his **BEST** recipes in his **HEAD!**



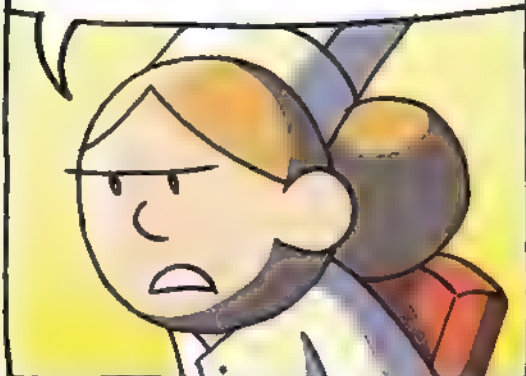
What about the ones in his book?



That book only goes up to **ÉCLAIR!** There are **twenty-one** more letters' worth of recipes after that! The only way to figure out Gustavo's secret recipes is to reverse engineer them!



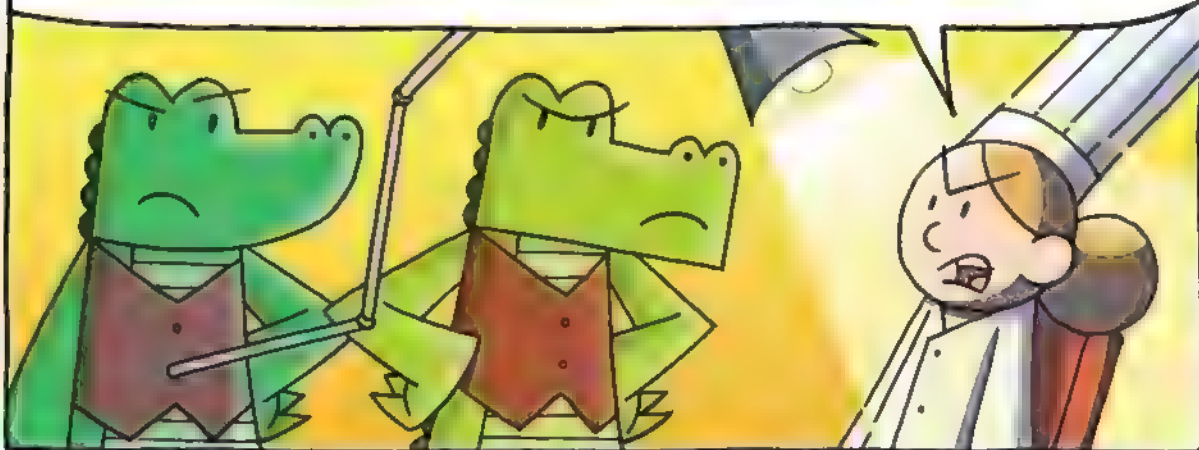
But that takes more science than we had available to us here.



And at the Science Factory, they've got all the science!

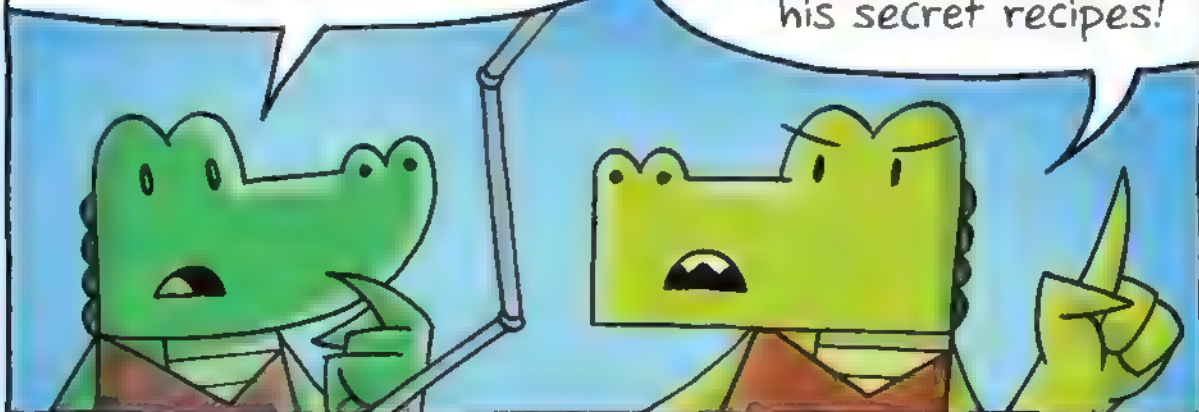


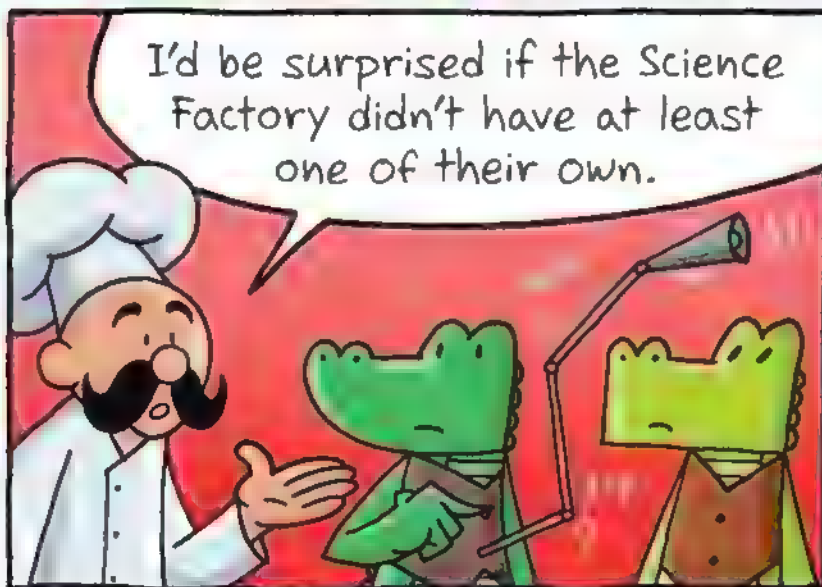
THAT'S RIGHT! When Bob and I saw Gustavo fall down that manhole, it was the perfect opportunity to put our plan into action. We didn't think he was *missing*. We just thought he was stuck in that hole.



So Bob disguised himself as a scientist to blend in at the Science Factory...

...and deconstructed Gustavo's baked goods with **science** to steal his secret recipes!







Who?

Dino.



Who?

Dino.



Who?

Dino.



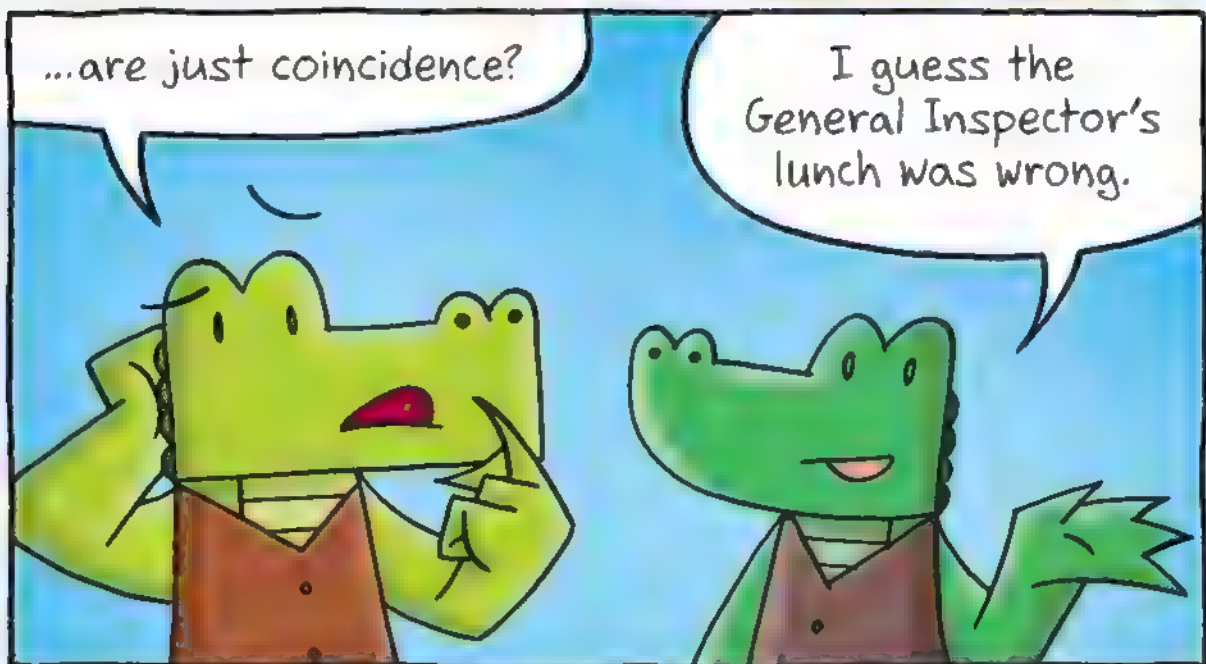
Who—

ENOUGH!

HE DOESN'T KNOW HOUDINO!

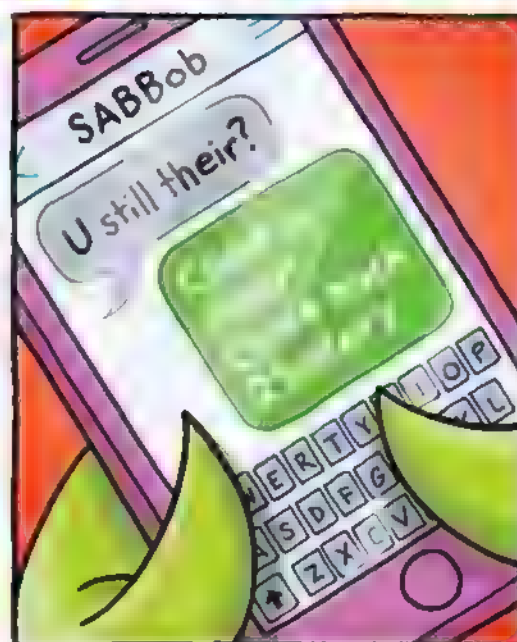
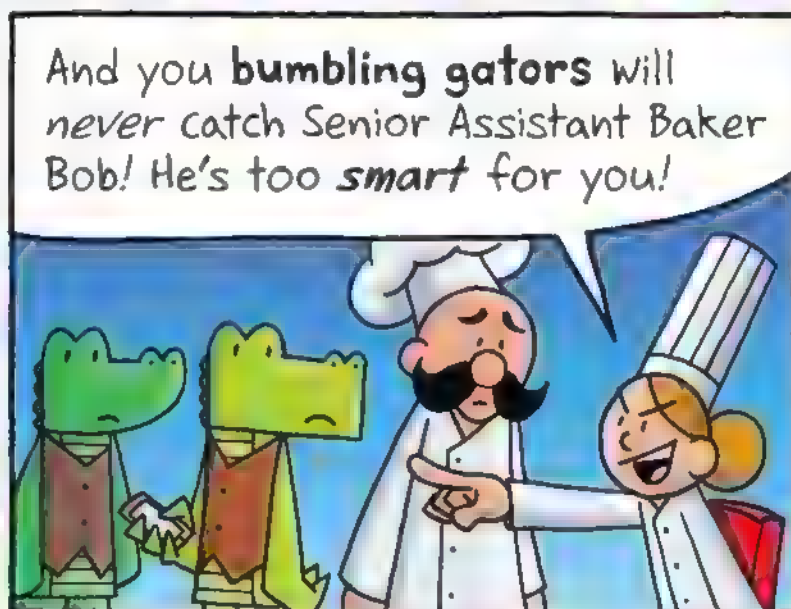


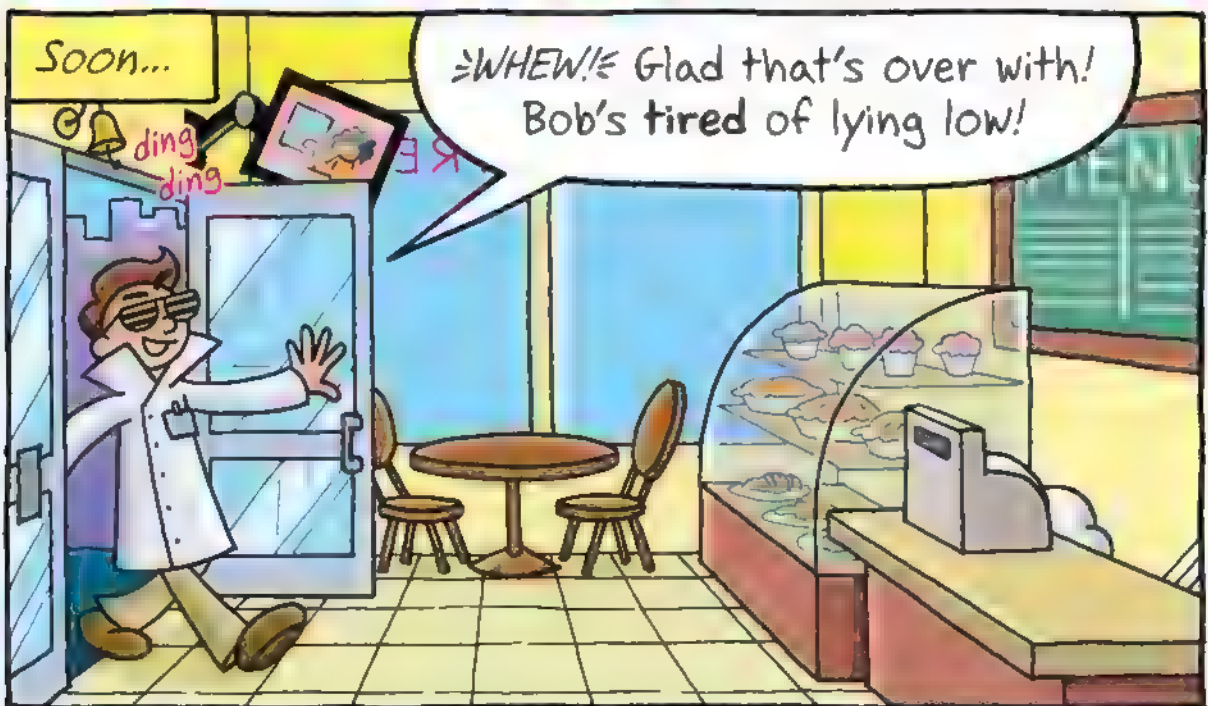
WHICH MEANS...the connections between Gustavo's disappearance, Bob and Marie's recipe thieving, and Houdino's cake shenanigans...



...are just coincidence?

I guess the General Inspector's lunch was wrong.





Good thing I just happened to run out of the factory with these stolen recipes right before the explosion!



And with Gustavo stuck in that manhole, **BAKER BOB'S** is gonna have the best baked goods in the world!

Marie...?



CLAMP!

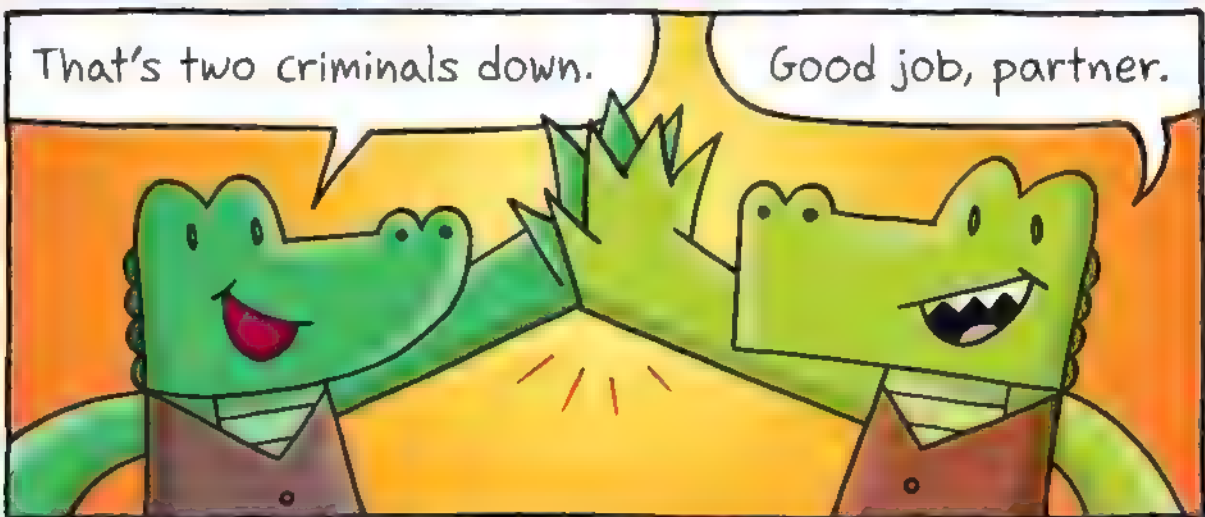


Oh, dang!

Hi, Bob.



Chapter 12



Houdino can *easily* blend in with a crowd. **ESPECIALLY** when he's wearing a raincoat!

Indeed.

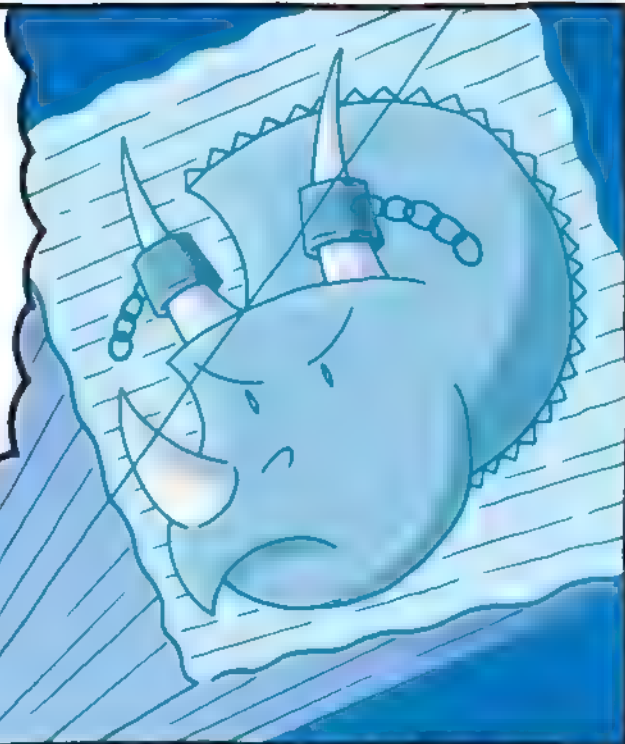


Let's see if the S.U.I.T. database has any useful info on him.

S.U.I.T. PEDIA



HOUDINO is a master escape artist. He began his career by performing daring feats of escape on stage. Breaking chains, getting out of handcuffs, escaping straitjackets, that sort of thing.



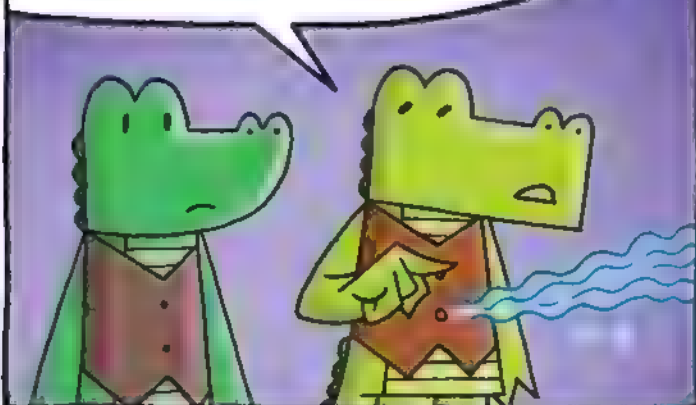
But what he couldn't escape were **low ticket sales**. So he turned to a life of crime—mostly bank robbing. He won't pass up a **steal**, and can't pass up a **deal**.



There is no vault that can stop him, and no cell that can hold him. Houdino likes to **break in**, **break out**, and **BREAKDANCE**.



Well, Mango, looks like to bust Houdino...



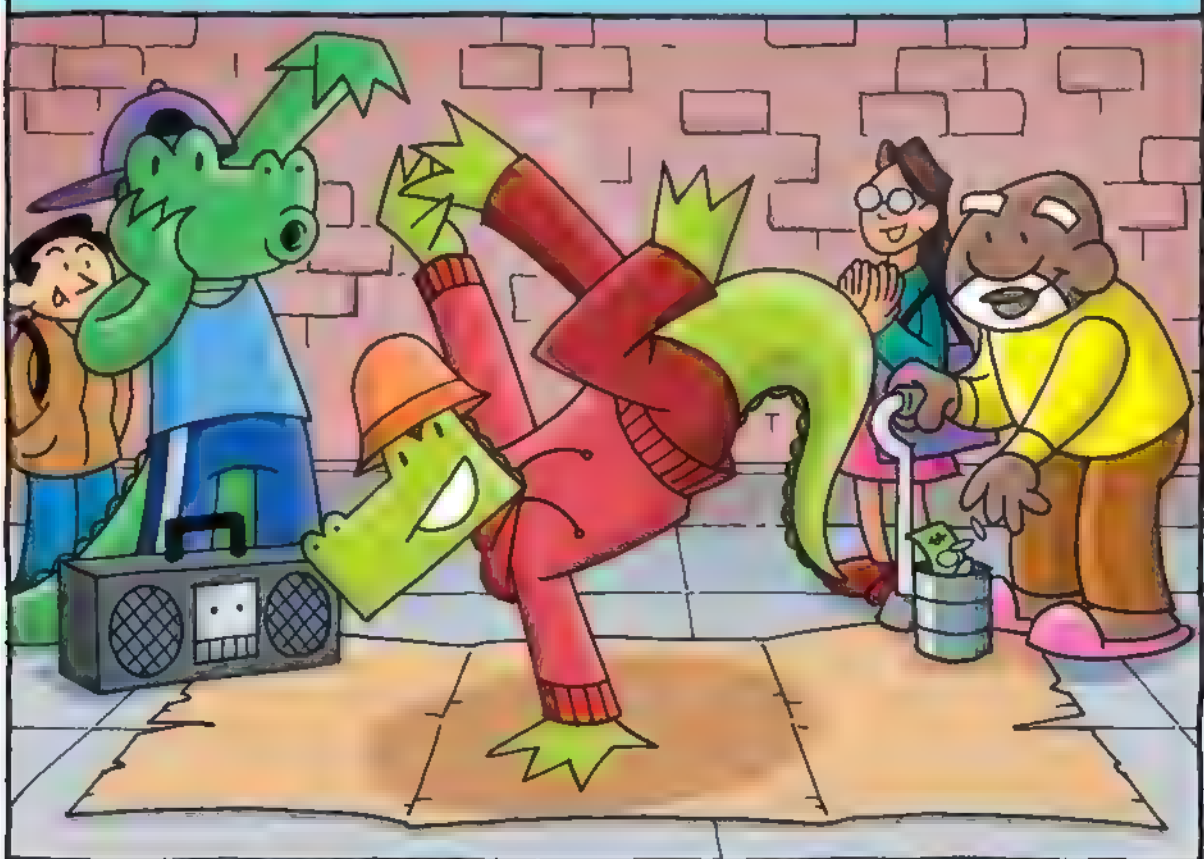
...we'll have to **BUST A MOVE**.



And so... ♪ You've got to push it to pop it! ♪



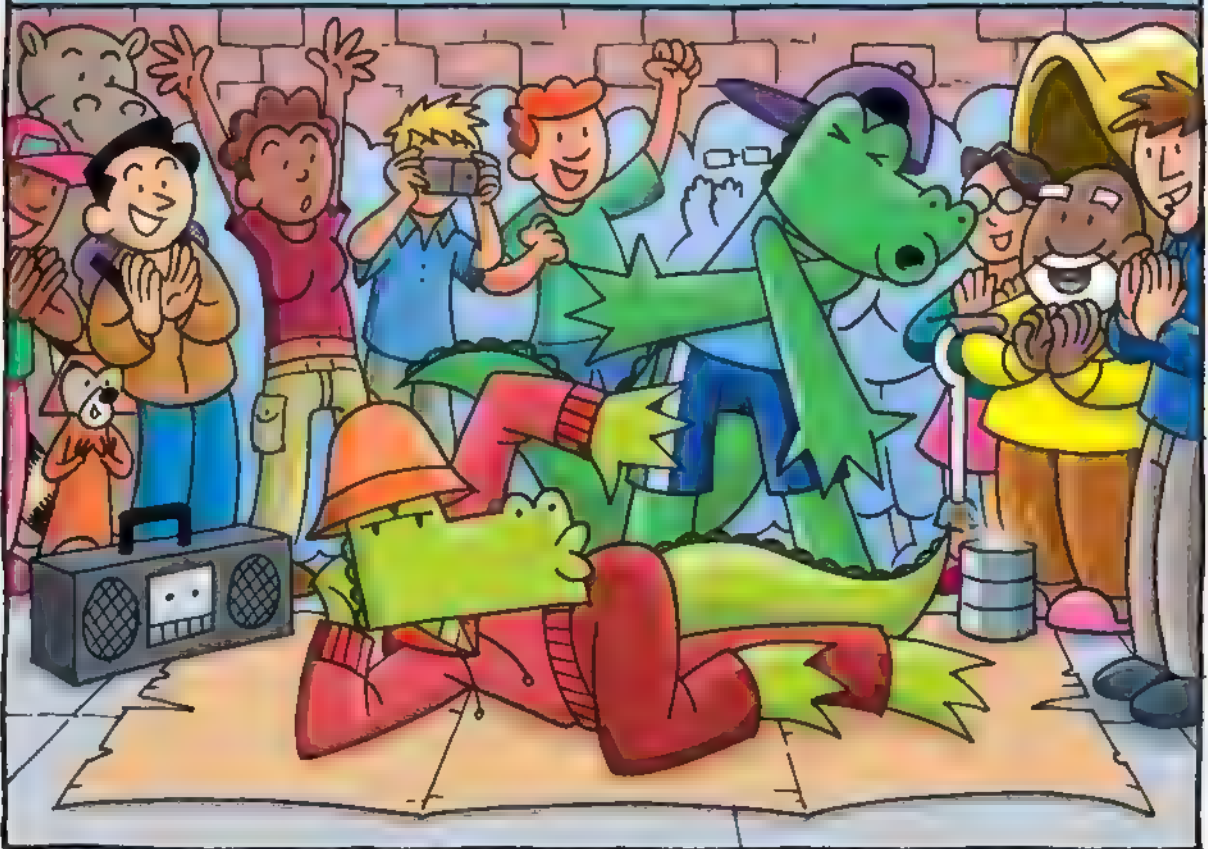
♪ ♪ ♪ Rock it to lock it! ♪ ♪ ♪



♪ ♪ ♫ Break it to make it! ♪ ♪ ♫



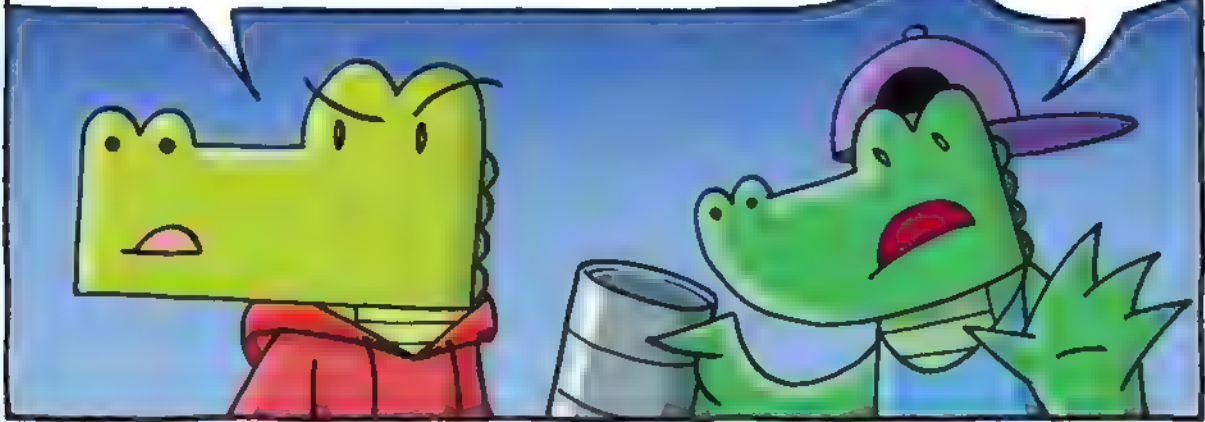
♪ ♪ ♫ Believe in the beat! ♪ ♪ ♫



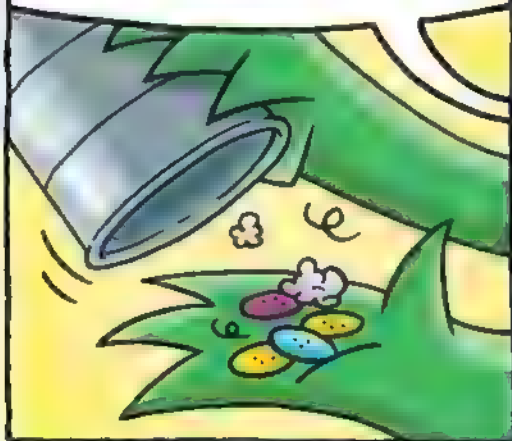


I was *sure* he wouldn't be able to resist a dance-off, but it looks like the only thing Houdino *can't* resist is money.

Even if it's small change!



The only things left in here are lint and mismatched buttons.



With that invention, robbing anyone is a piece of cake!



The Thingamasteve *ONLY* works on money. Which means Houdino can't use it to steal anything else.

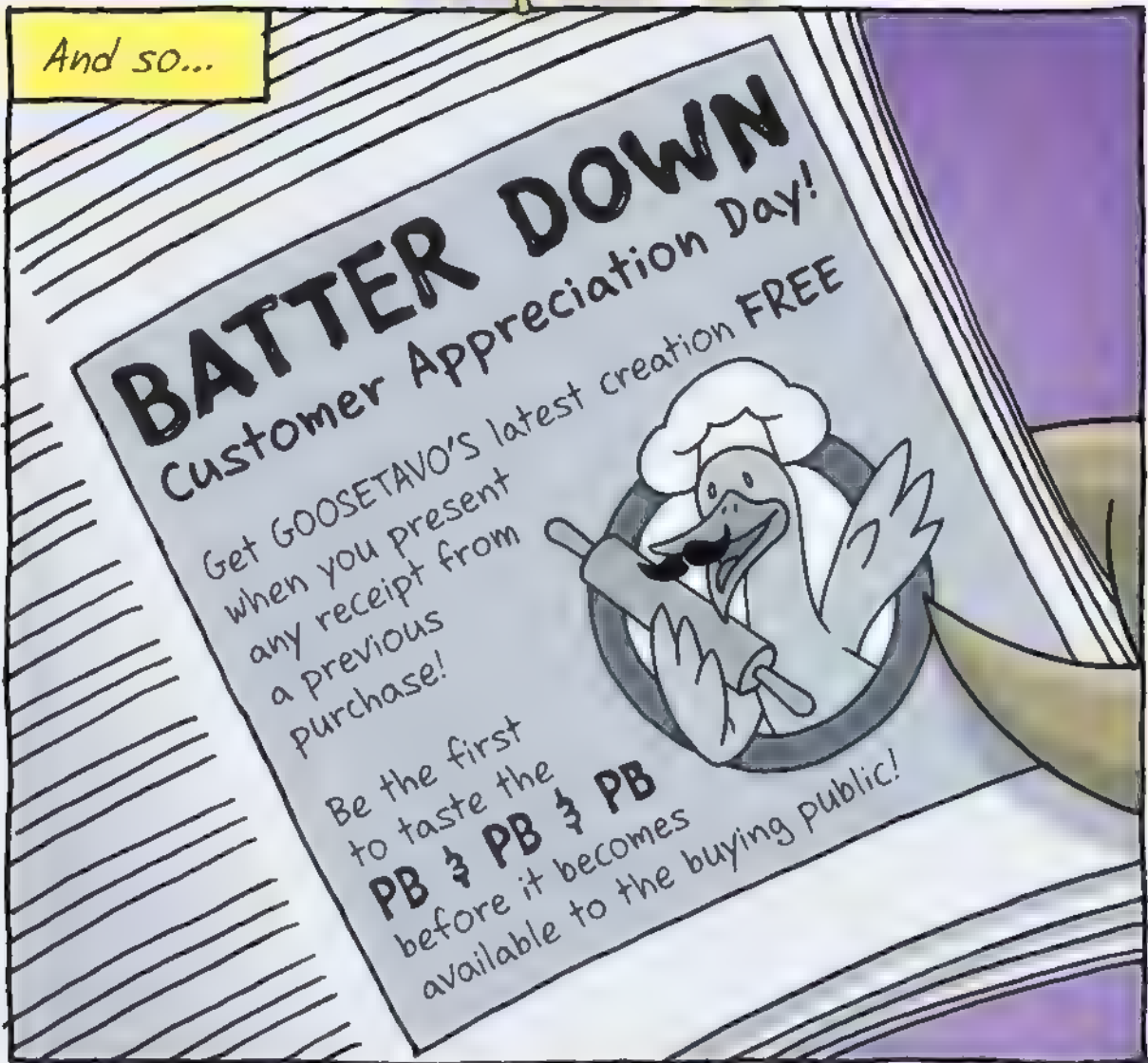


So what's the money *FOR*? He hasn't been caught spending it on anything.



Chapter 13

And so...



I may have more
money now than I
could ever spend...



...but I'm not gonna pass
up something that's **FREE!**



Eventually...

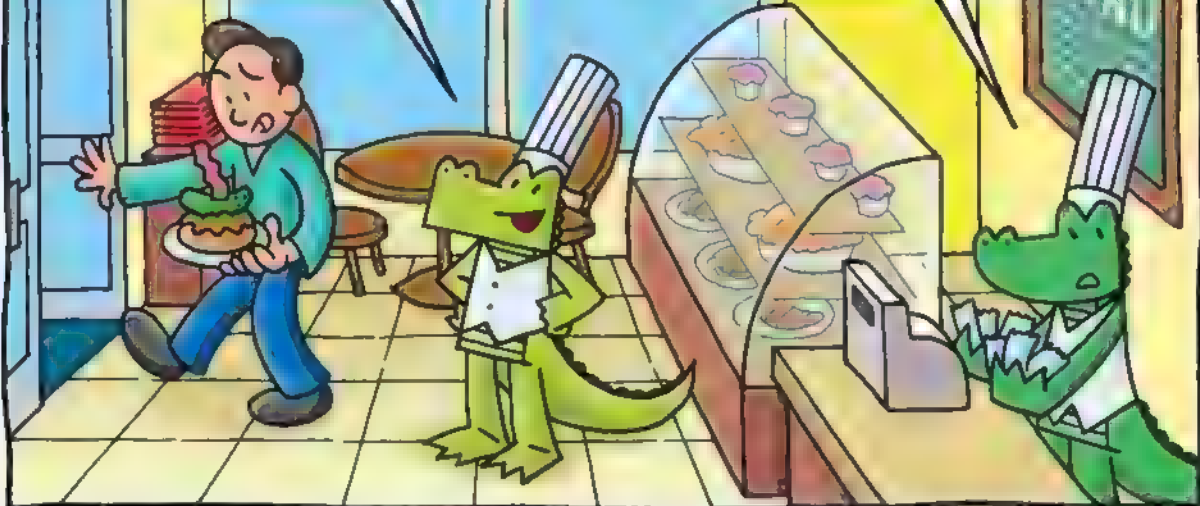
Thank you,
come again!



BATTER DOWN
HOT FRESH

Enjoy your Peanut
Butter Pickle Bacon
Pastry Bun!

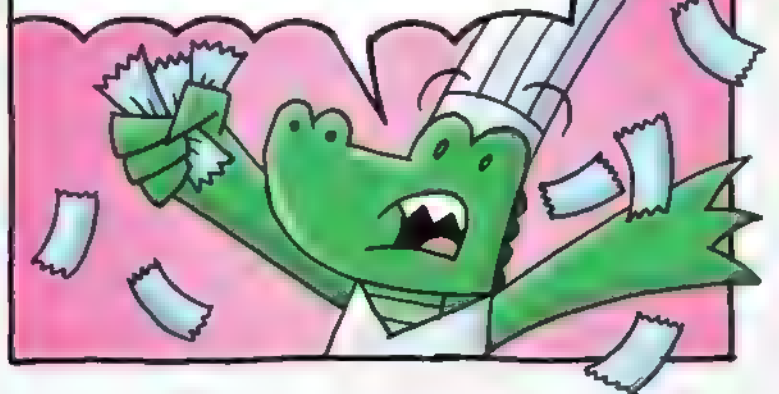
I would never have thought
so many people held on
to their receipts.

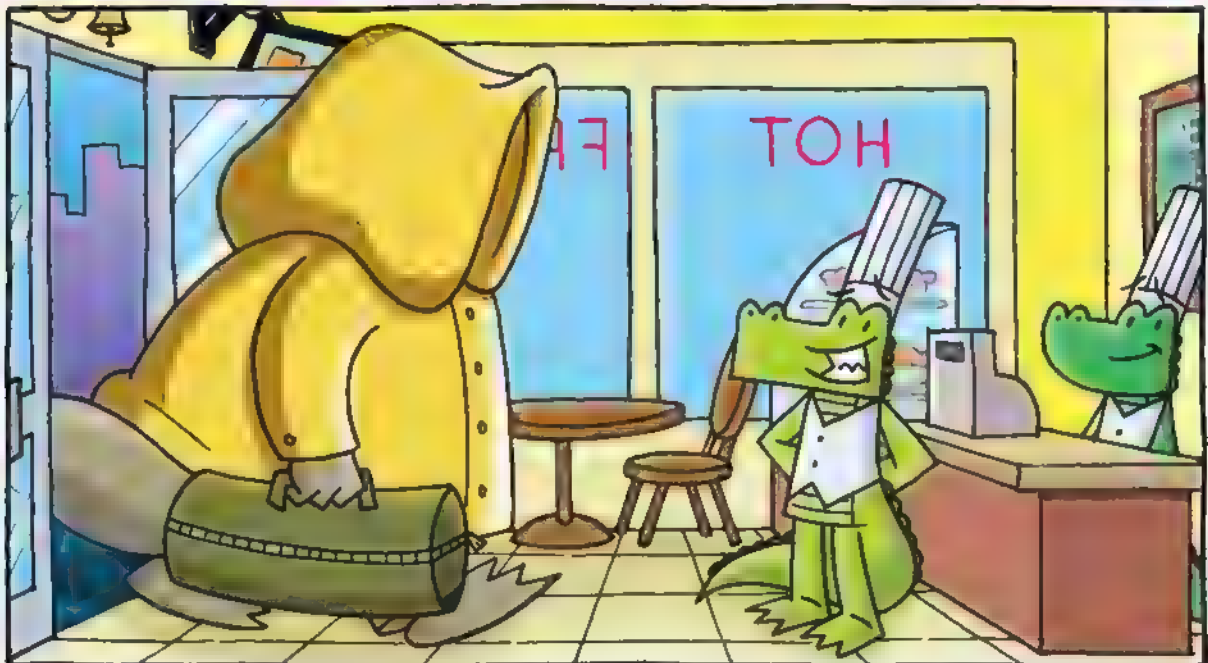


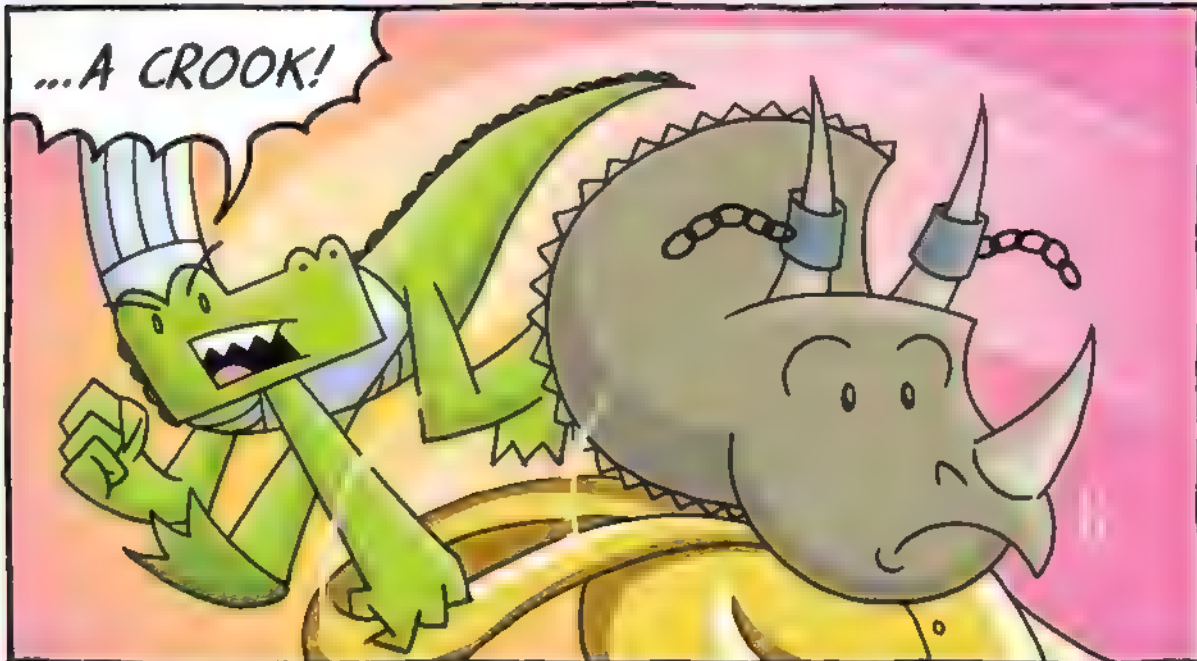
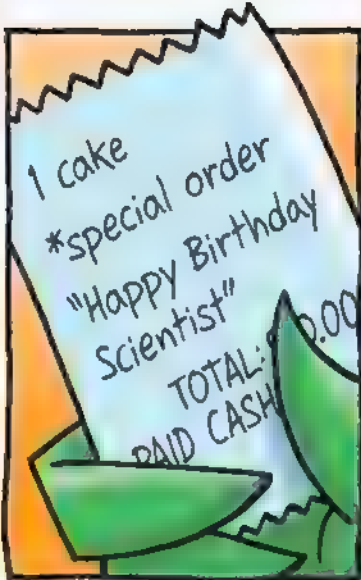
This one is *SEVEN*
YEARS OLD!

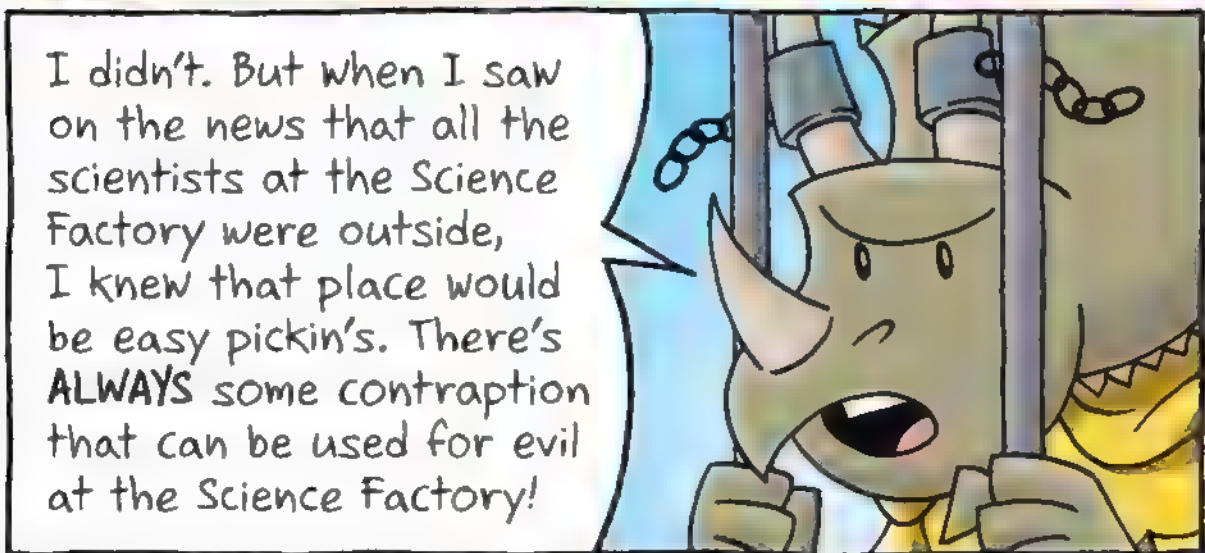


That coupon is costing
us a fortune! At this rate,
our bakery will be out of
business by tomorrow!



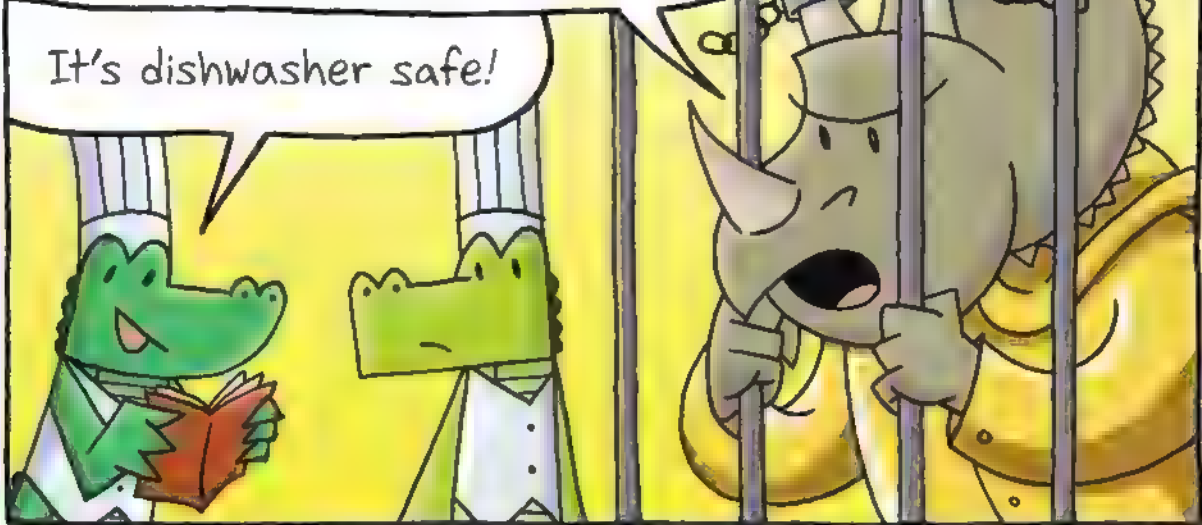






And handily enough, this one came with an instruction manual.

It's dishwasher safe!



And the ruse with the cake?



Everyone likes cake!
Easy way in.

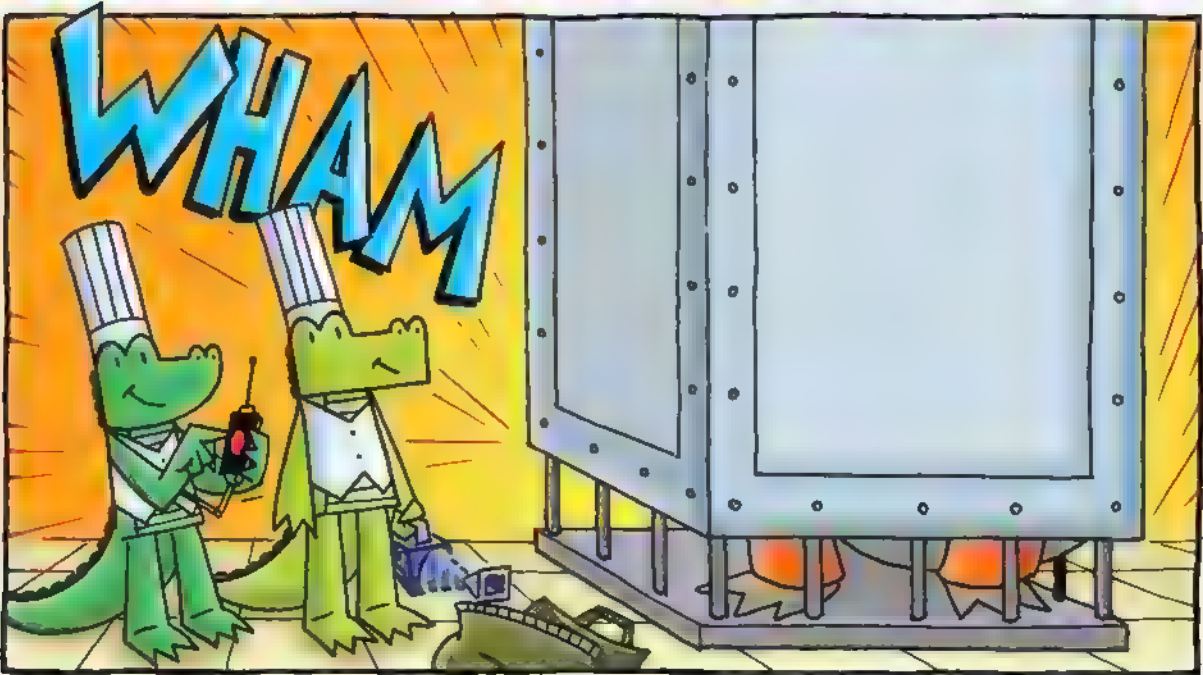
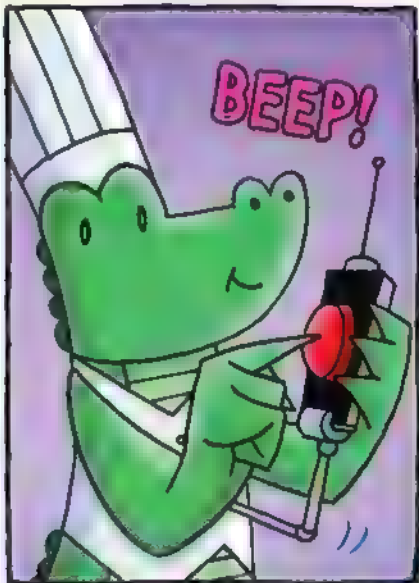


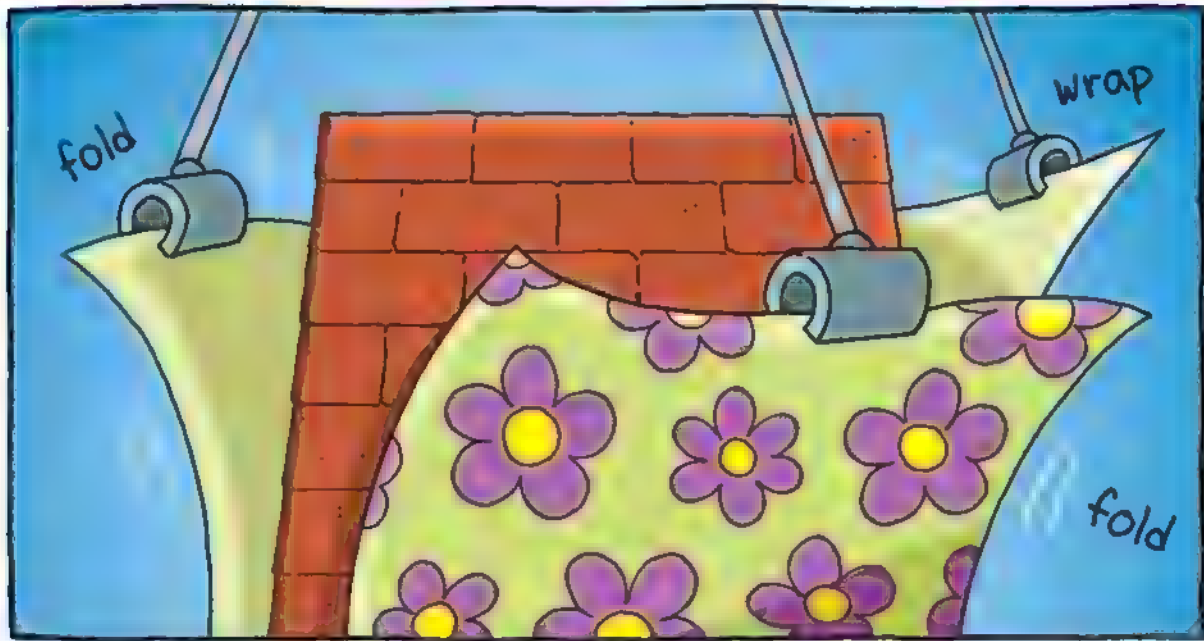
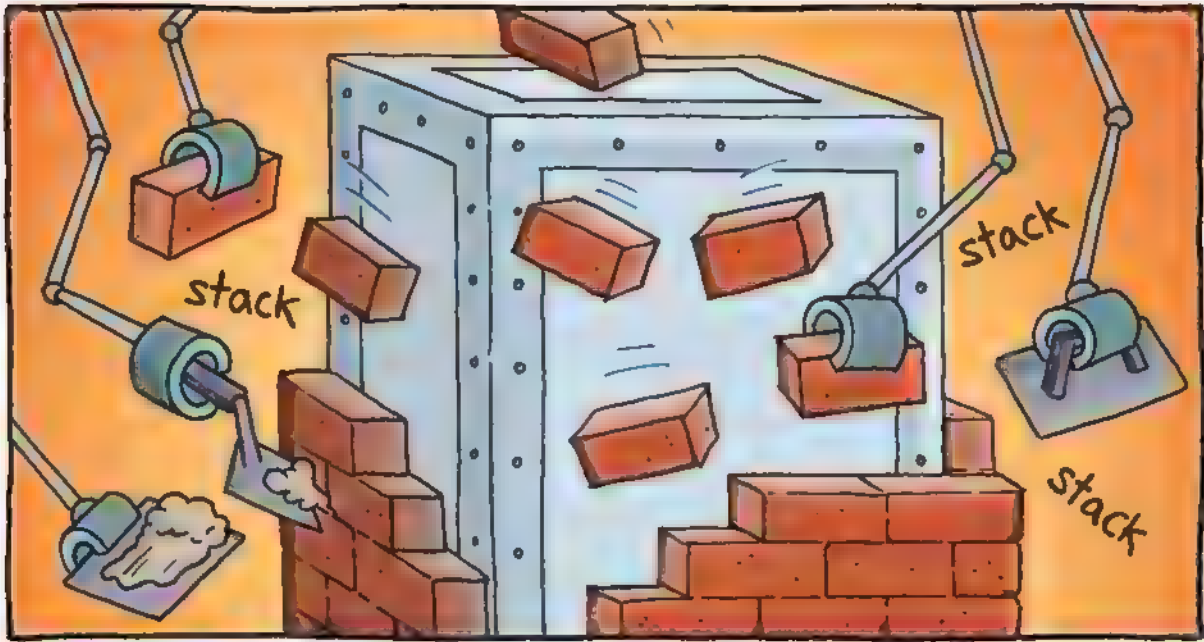
Though I do like to make an **EXPLOSIVE** exit.

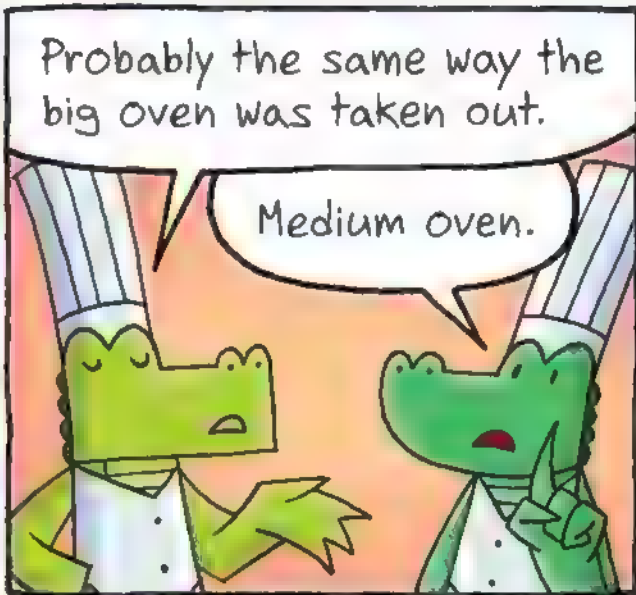


Well, your exiting days are over!











Gustavo!

Gators, please tell me I can stop baking your crazy pastries.

I did enough of that in the sewer!

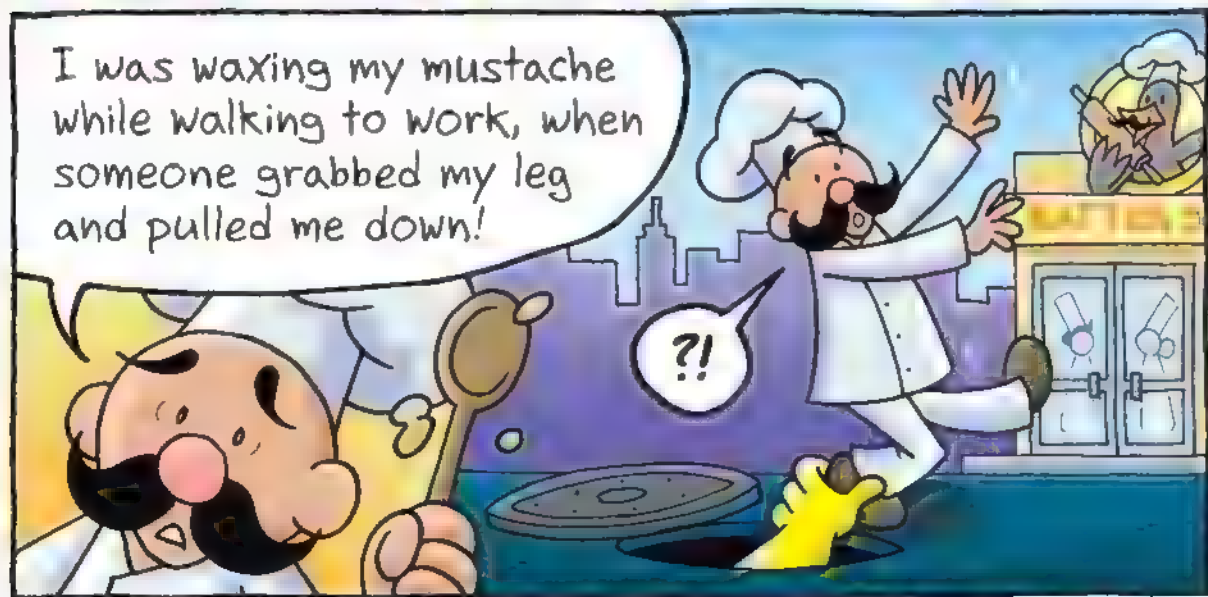


What happened to you? Start from the beginning.



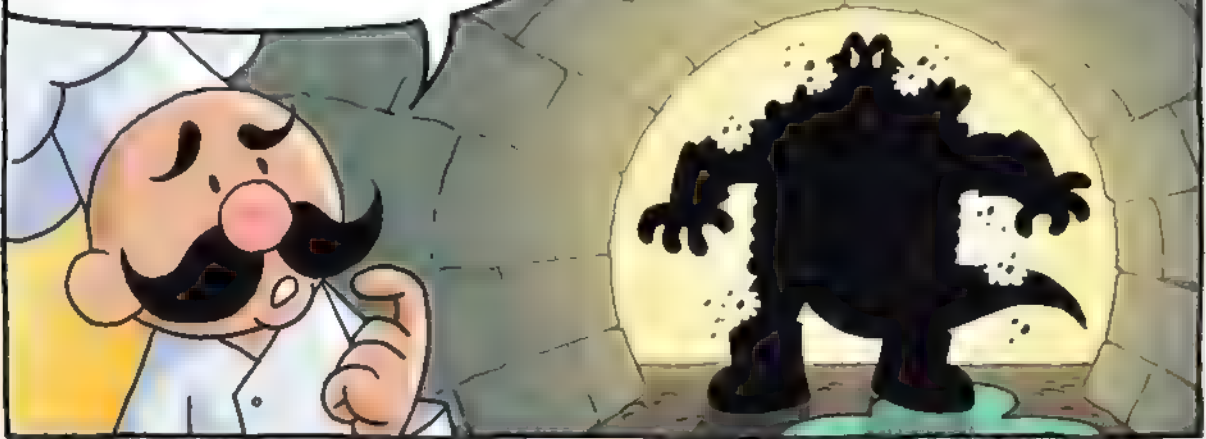
Well, I was born a poor farm boy—

START from your abduction.



I was waxing my mustache while walking to work, when someone grabbed my leg and pulled me down!

He was the most **UNSAVORY** character...though maybe he'd be all right with a sharp cheese and some prosciutto...



He was...crumbling... half-eaten...



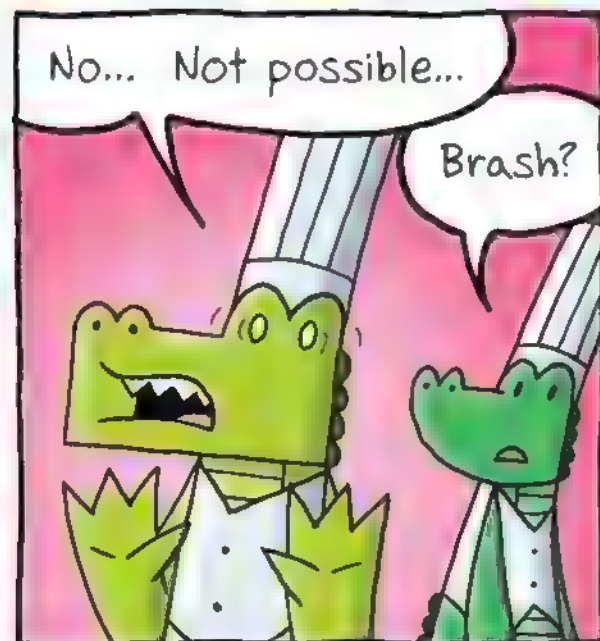
YOU'RE NOT MAKING ANY SENSE, MAN!

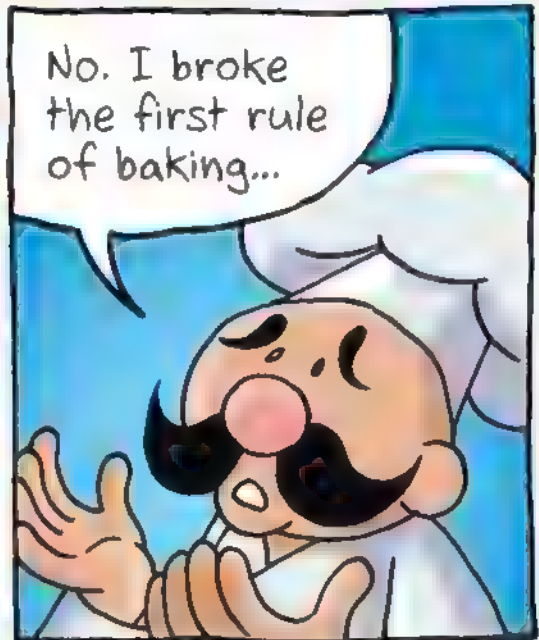


He forced me to develop a new type of dough. A *super* dough. A *hybrid* of cracker, cake, cookie, and bread.

A **HYBREAD.**









His name was Daryl. He was S.U.I.T.'s top agent!
I learned so much from him in our time together.



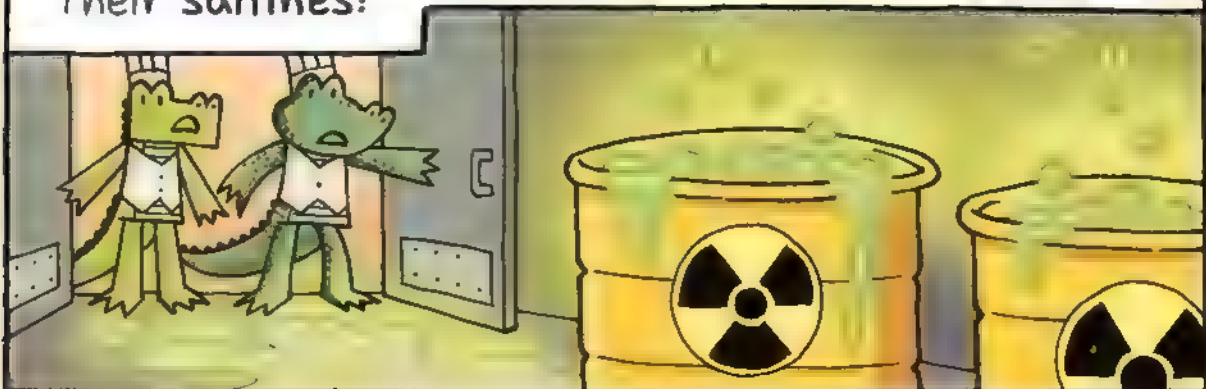
Our assignment was supposed to be easy as pie.

Daryl was going to retire. It was his last mission.



But no one expected it to be his *last last* mission.

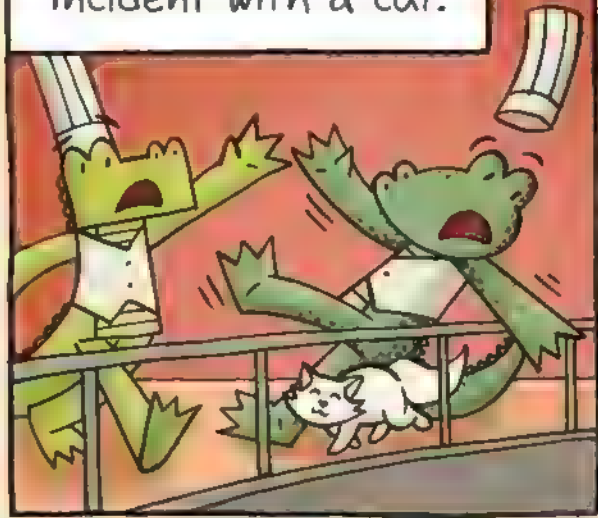
We were cracking down on a cracker company that was disposing of nuclear waste by baking it into their saltines!



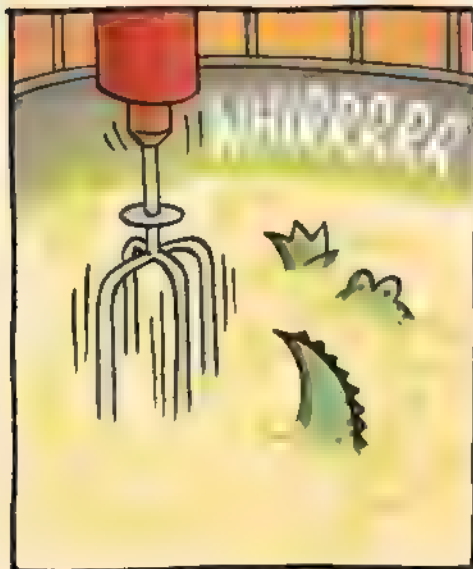
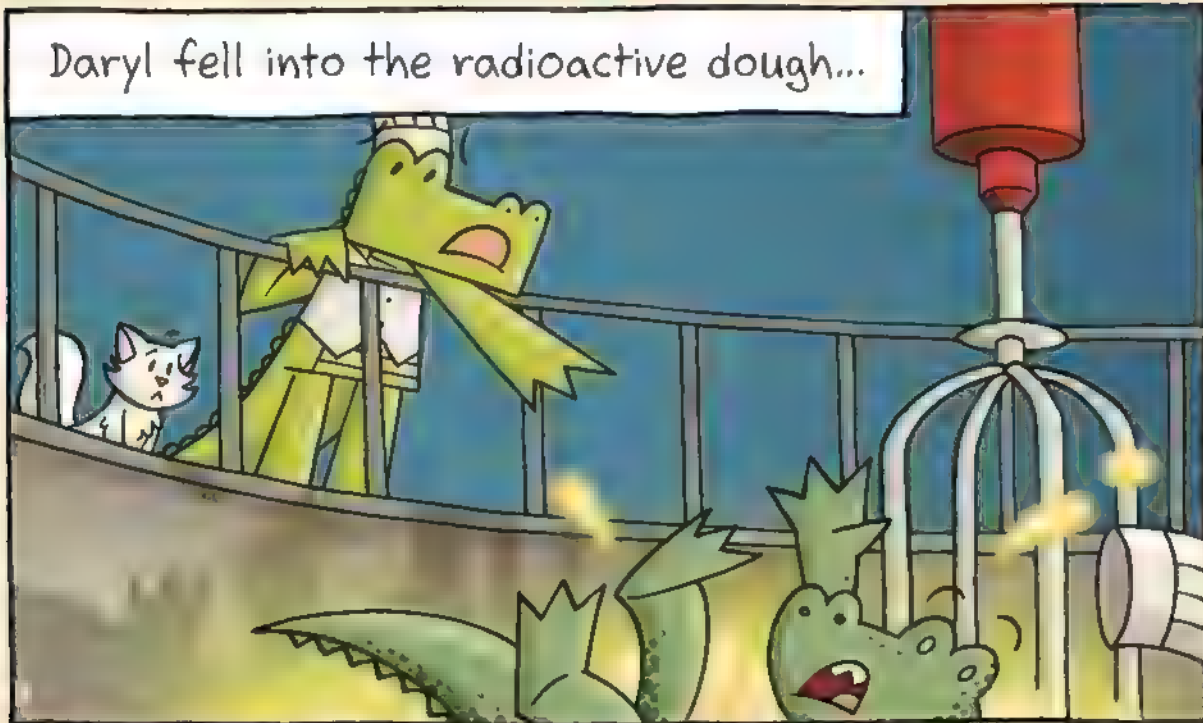
We cracked the case...



...but there was an incident with a cat.



Daryl fell into the radioactive dough...

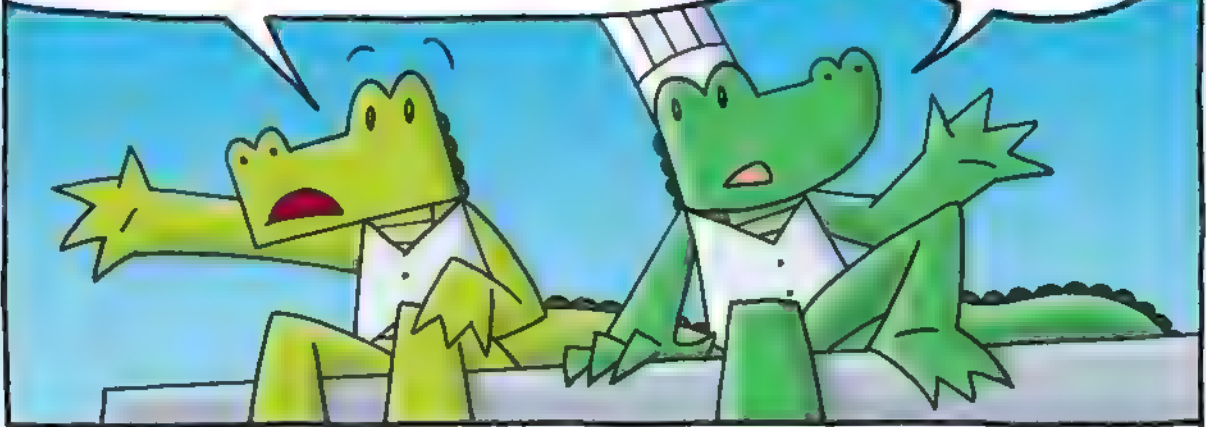


...and was never seen again.



Or so I thought. But he must have been alive this whole time! I could have saved him! It's all my fault! And now...he's an evil saltine out for revenge...

Yeah, I'd be salty about being left to die, too.

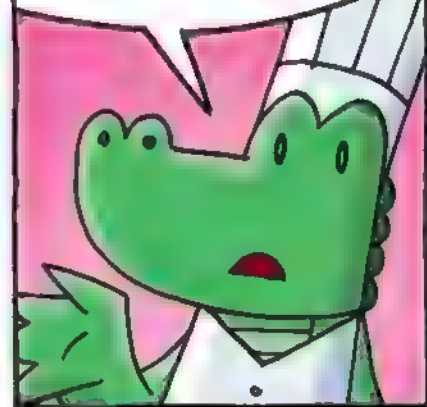


Sorry, Brash. I can only imagine how difficult this must be.

Thanks, Mango.



But you're a great detective. And Mustachio is safe now.

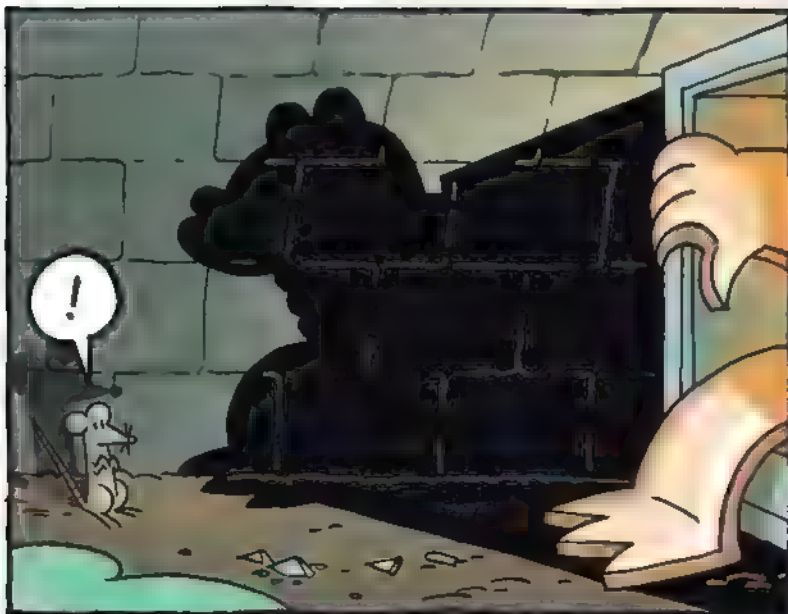
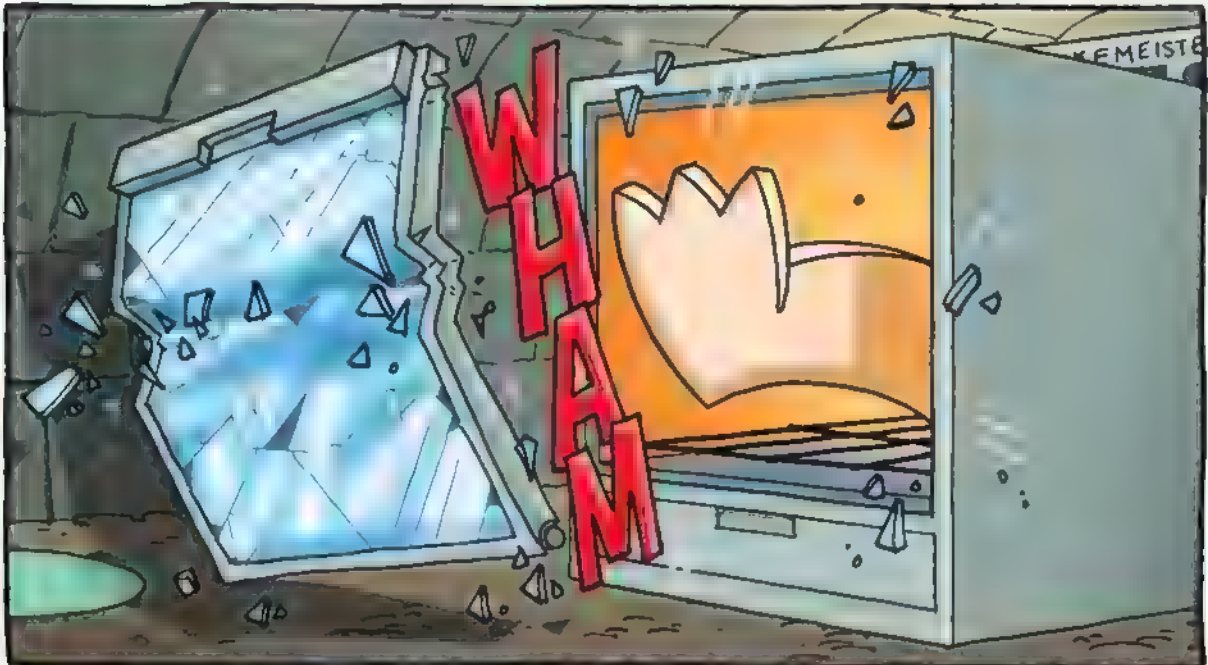
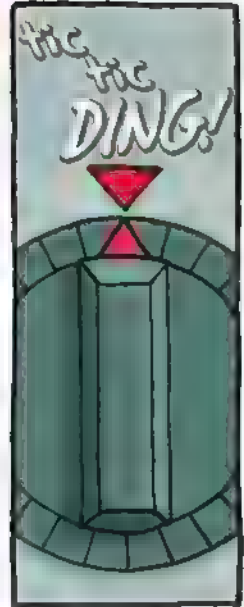
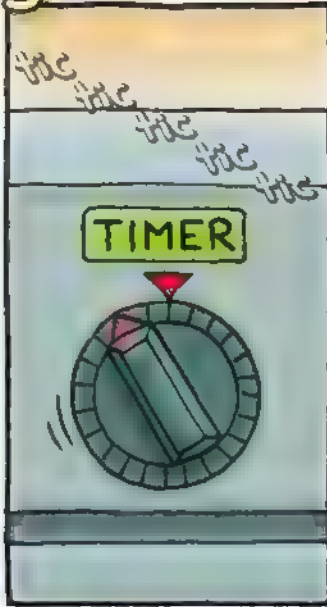
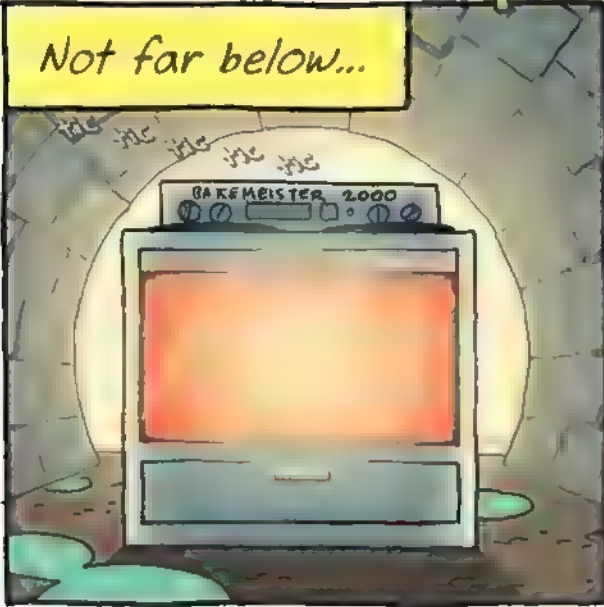


We can deal with Crackerdile later.

Something tells me his time will be up soon.



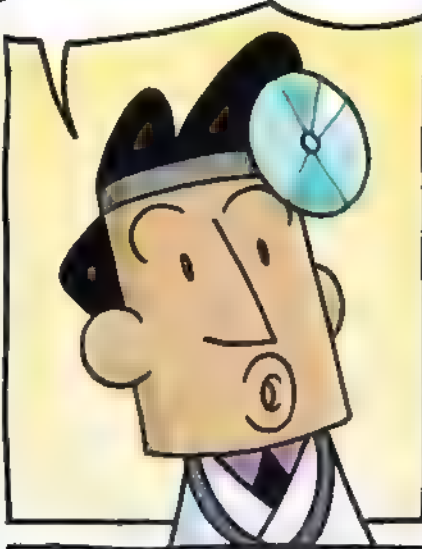
Epilogue



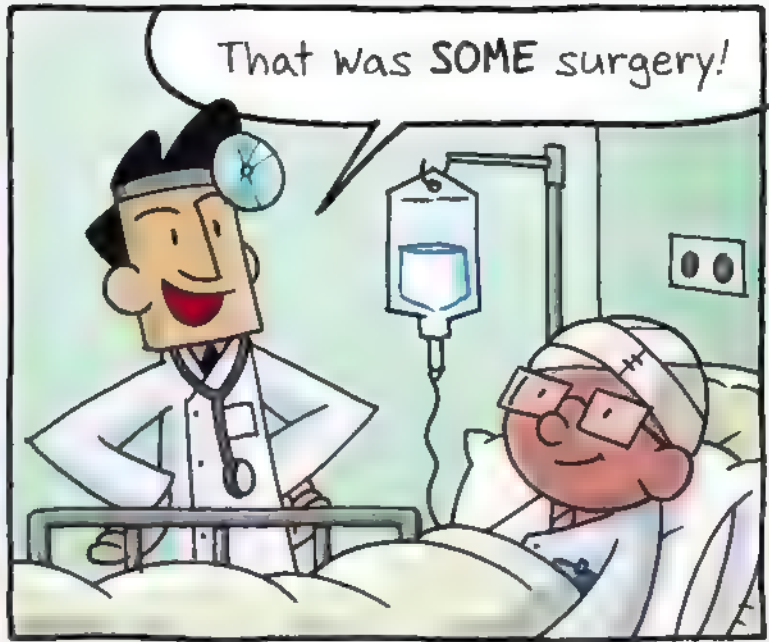




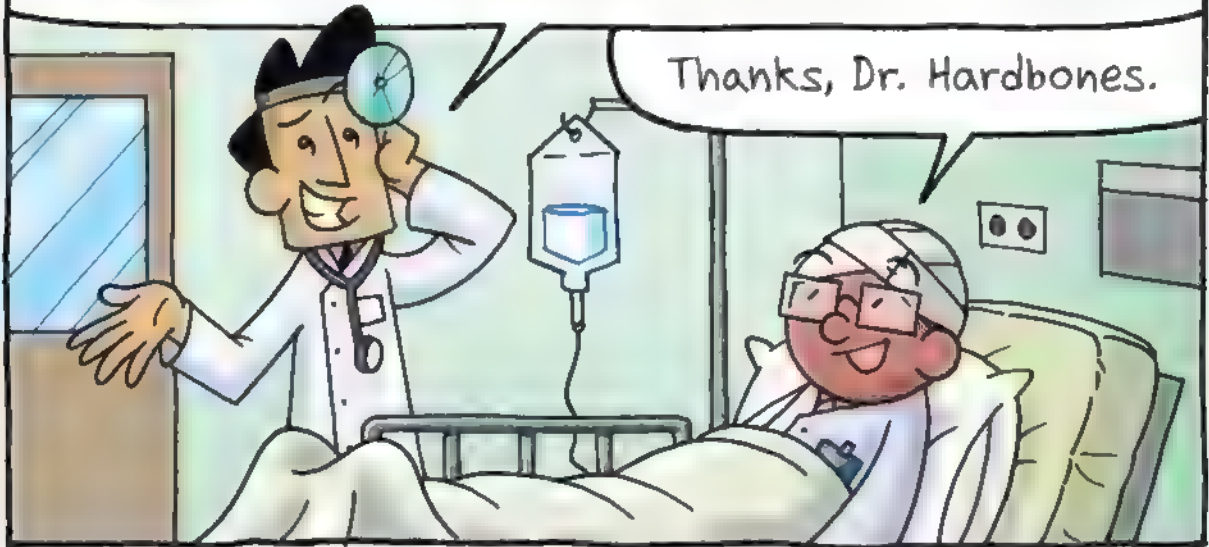
Ooooooooooh, boy!



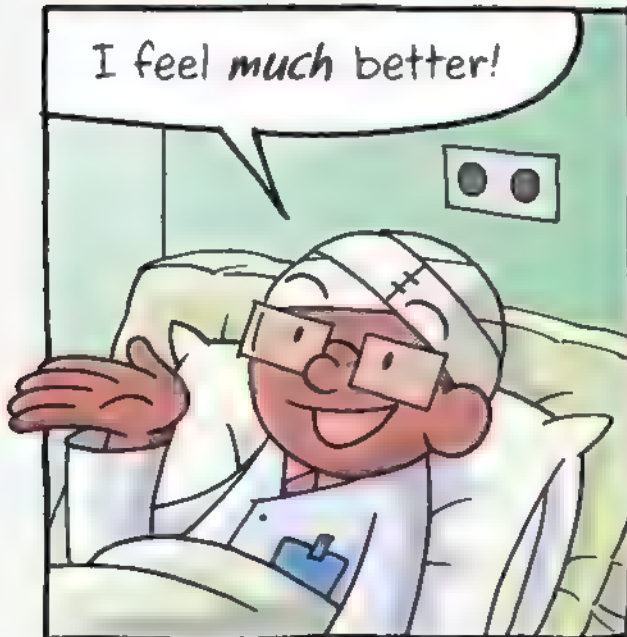
That was **SOME** surgery!



Not quite newsworthy, thankfully, but still a success.



I feel *much* better!



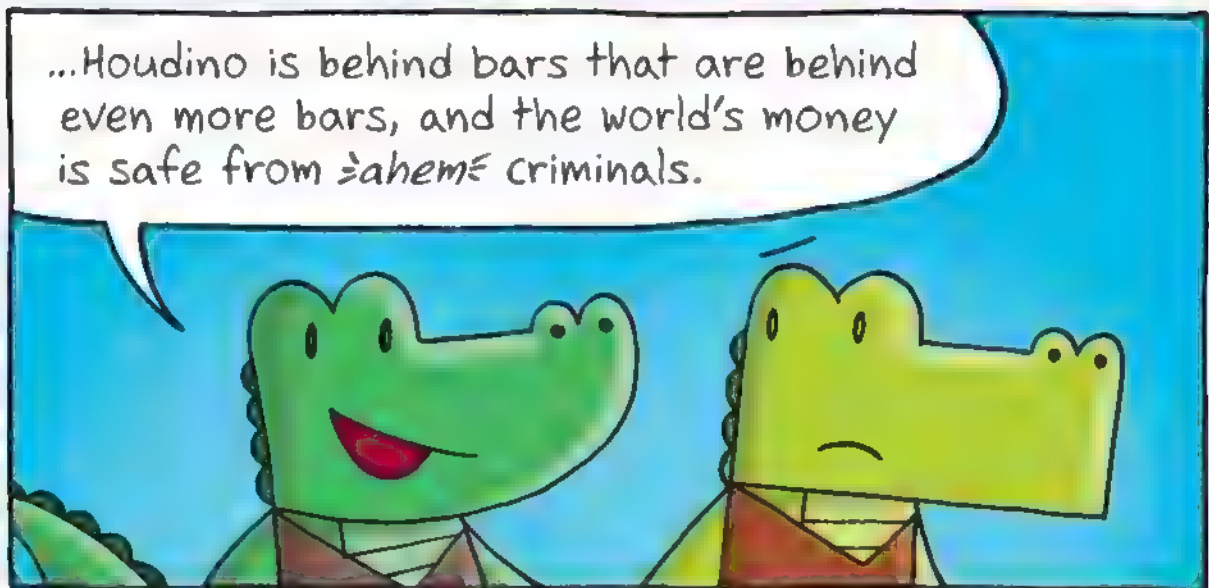
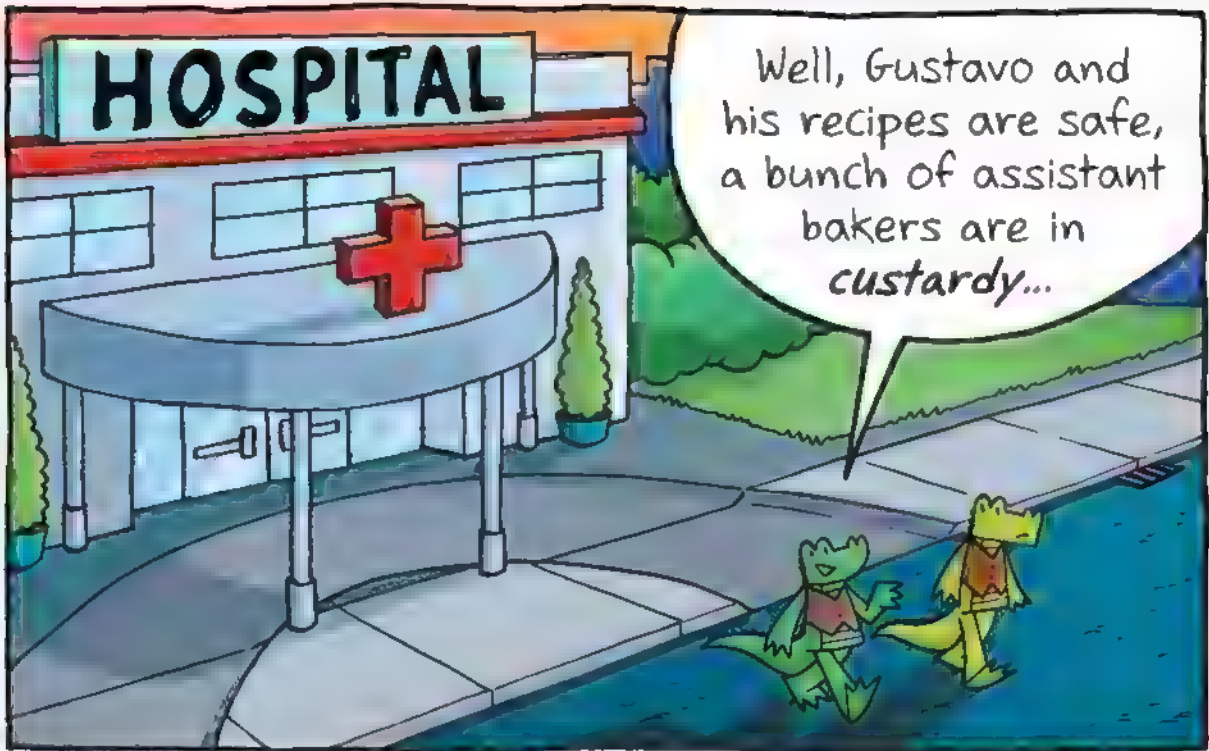
And even... **SMARTER!**



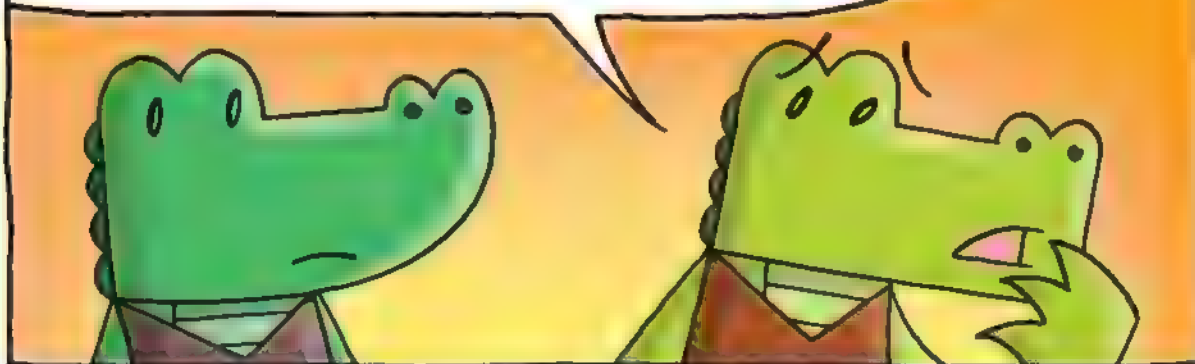








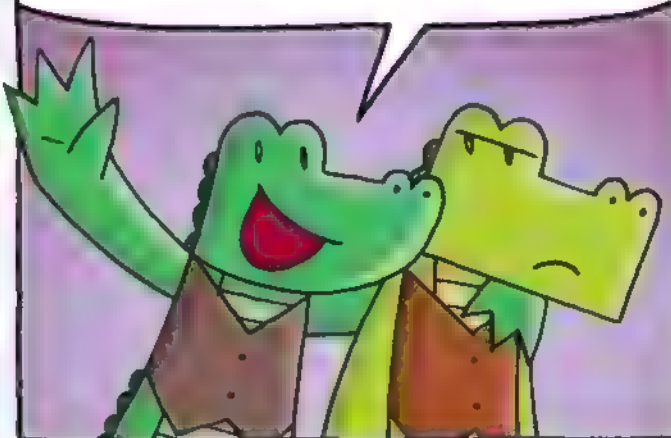
Even if Gustavo didn't use the super dough, as a former agent of S.U.I.T., Crackerdile is still a force to be reckoned with.



Listen—we're MANGO and BRASH. We're **INVESTIGATORS!**



When Crackerdile comes for us, we'll be **bready** for him!



We'll get that cracker in a jam!

He'll be toast!

We'll... We'll...

We'll bring that crust to justice?



HA!
Good one!

THE END...for now!

INVESTIGATORS

How to draw MANGO & BRASH

1. Draw two arches that sort of look like a bird with long, droopy wings.



2. Add a short line for the top of the snout.



3. Draw two smaller arches for the nose.



4. Make a line at the back of the head, and for Mango draw a curved snout connecting his neck to his nose.

If you're drawing Brash, give him a rectangular snout.



5. Add details like eyes, nostrils, and neck ridges. Give them expressions with their mouths and eyebrows!

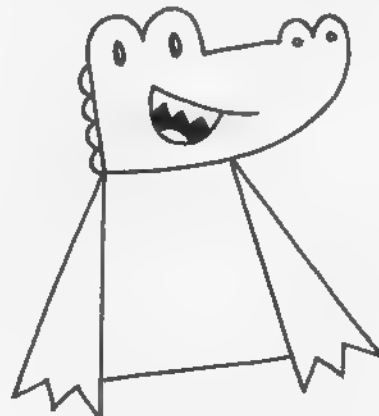


6. Mango and Brash have identical bodies. Let's draw Mango's, because Brash looks grumpy!

Draw a slightly crooked box shape for the torso.



7. Next, add arms, with little triangles at the ends for fingers. The Investigators usually have three, or four if we can see their thumbs.



8. Draw legs and feet, similar to the arms, with three triangles for toes.



9. Add a tail.



10. Almost done! Your Gator will need belly stripes and tail ridges.



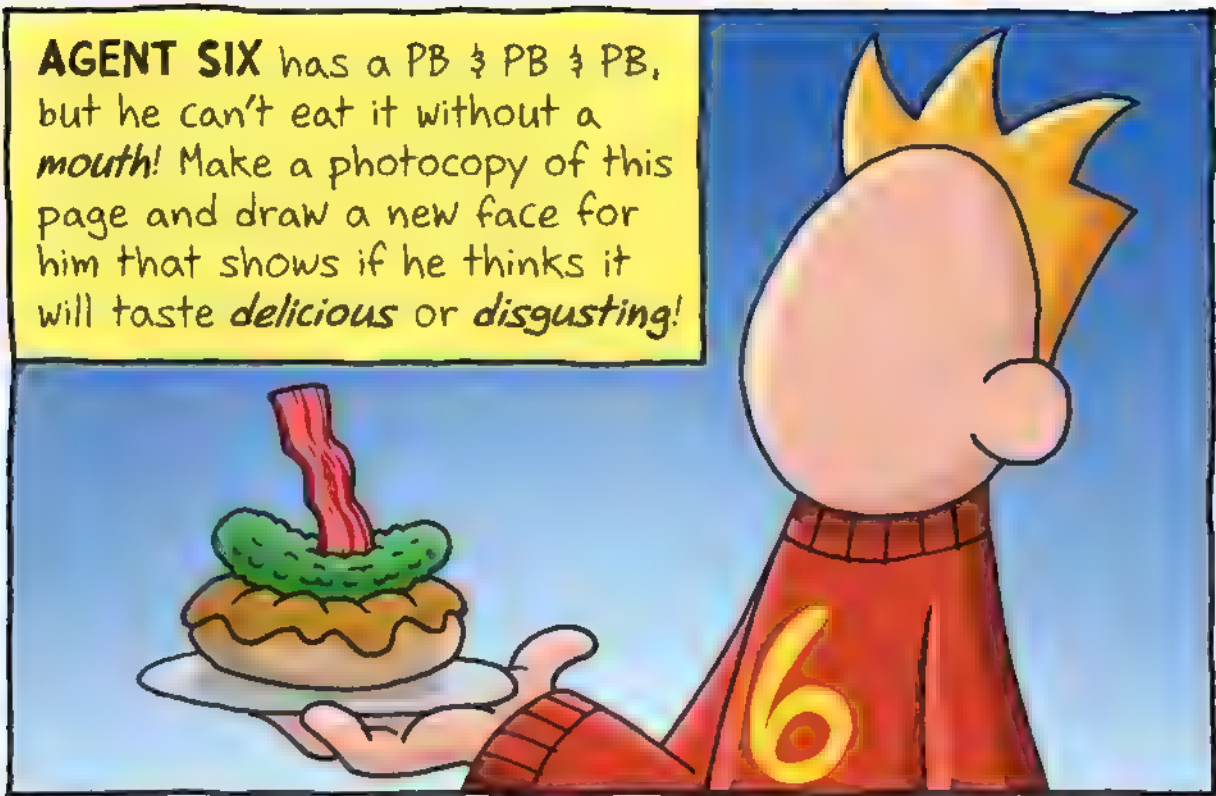
11. Remember to put them in a V.E.S.T. when they're on the job!



12. Last, give them some gadgets and color them in. Mango is dark green and Brash is light green. What kind of spy gear do YOU think they should have?



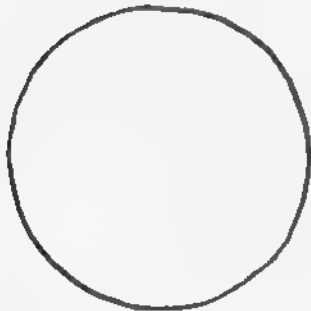
AGENT SIX has a PB & PB & PB, but he can't eat it without a *mouth*! Make a photocopy of this page and draw a new face for him that shows if he thinks it will taste *delicious* or *disgusting*!



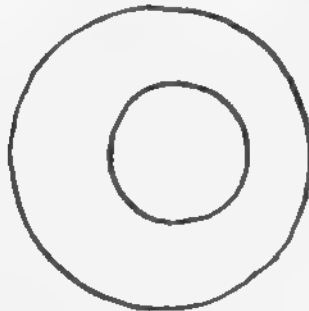
How to draw C-ORB*

*Computerized Ocular Remote Butler

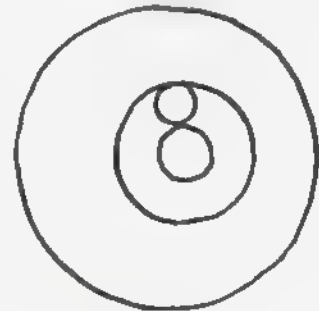
1. Draw a circle.



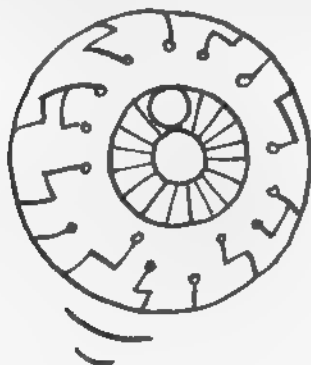
2. Draw another circle.



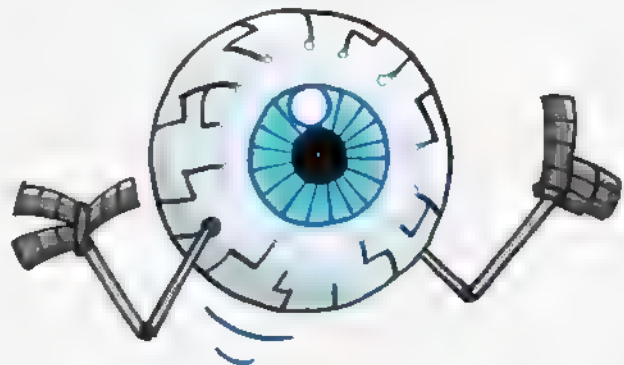
3. Draw two more circles!



4. Draw details like circuitry and iris lines. Add little swooshes to indicate C-ORB is floating.



5. Give C-ORB arms and color if you like. Use different colors to change C-ORB's mood!



From the files of S.U.I.T.

S.U.I.T. HQ



Movie Theater



Library



Computer Mainframe



Situation Room



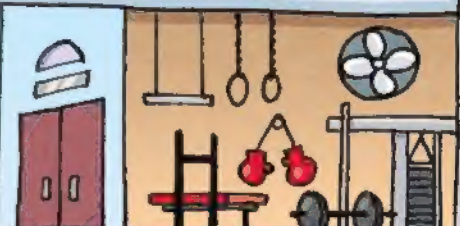
Food Court



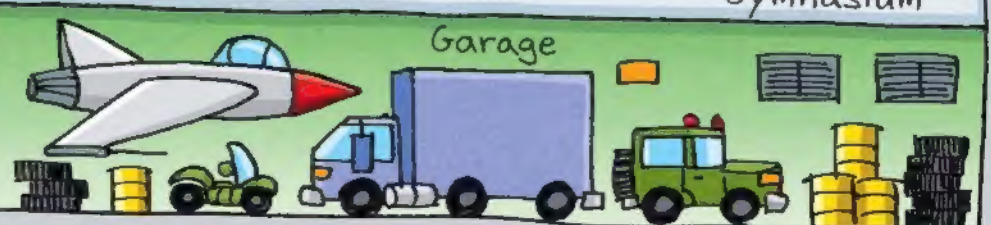
A.R.M.S. Division



Pool



Gymnasium



Garage

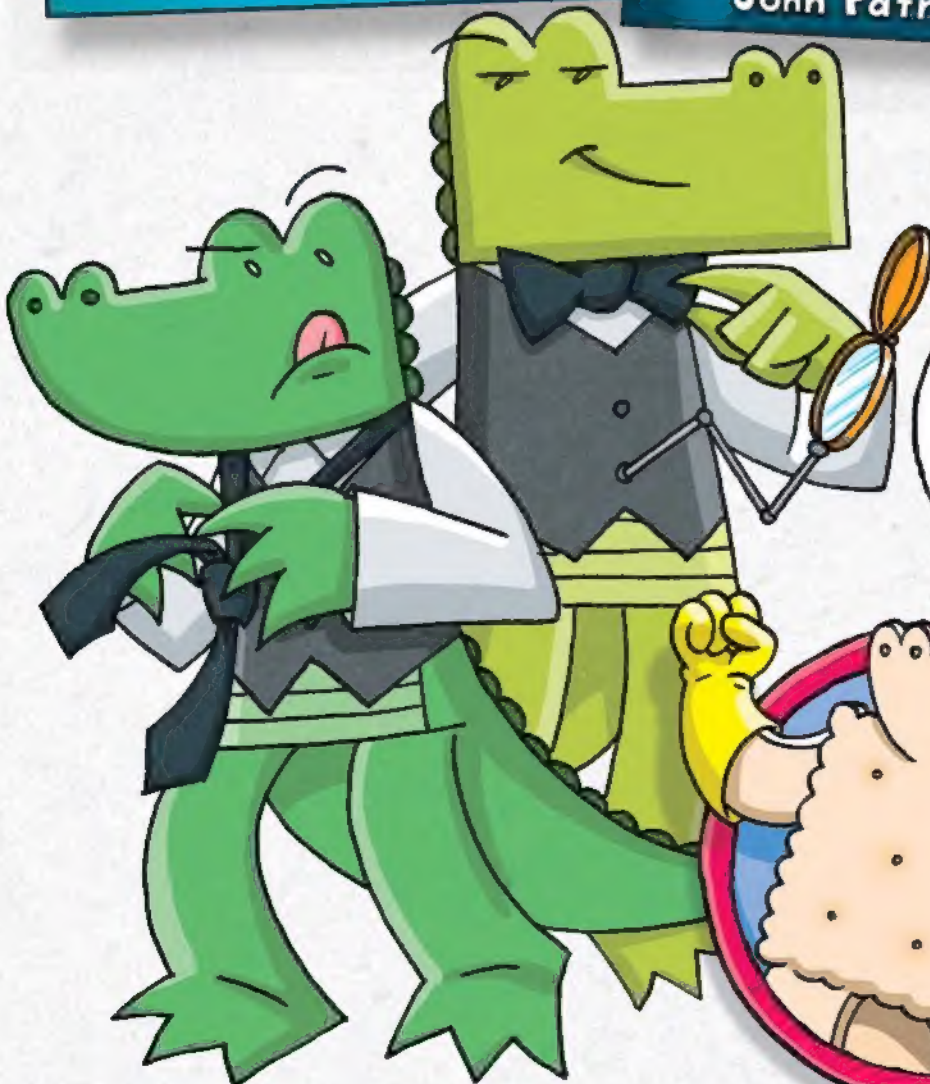
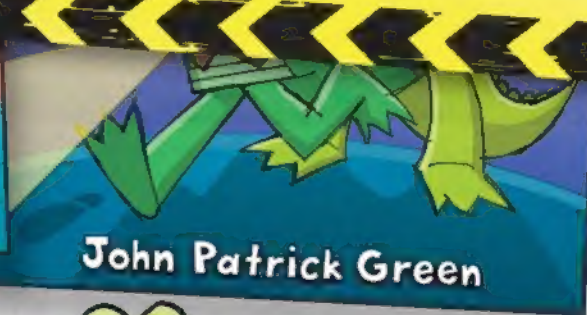
Classified

MANGO & BRASH *will return!*

Investi
GATORS

Investi
GATORS

CLASSIFIED - TOP SECRET



More laughter and
adventure from

:01

First Second
firstsecondbooks.com



Kitten Construction Company:
Meet the House Kittens
by John Patrick Green



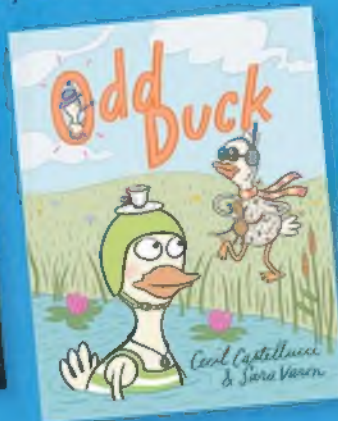
Kitten Construction Company:
A Bridge Too Fur
by John Patrick Green



Hippopotamister
by John Patrick Green



Be Prepared
by Vera Bringsol



Odd Duck
by Cecil Castellucci
and Sara Varon



Making Scents
by Arthur Yorinks, Braden Lamb,
and Shelli Paroline



Giants Beware!
by Jorge Aguirre and
Rafael Rosado



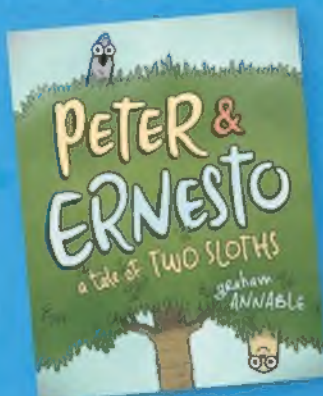
Dragons Beware!
by Jorge Aguirre and
Rafael Rosado



Monsters Beware!
by Jorge Aguirre and
Rafael Rosado



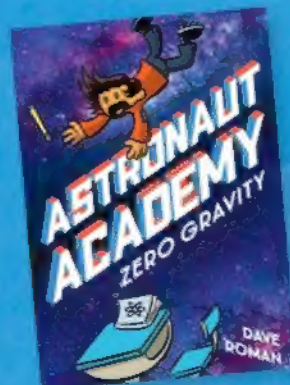
The Big Bad Fox
by Benjamin Renner



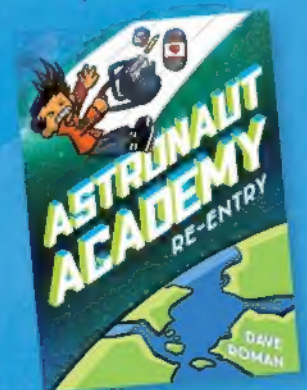
Peter & Ernesto:
A Tale of Two Sloths
by Graham Annable



Peter & Ernesto:
The Lost Sloths
by Graham Annable



Astronaut Academy:
Zero Gravity
by Dave Roman



Astronaut Academy:
Re-entry
by Dave Roman

These are the INVESTIGATORS:



sewer-loving agents of S.U.I.T.* and scourge of supervillains everywhere!



With their Very Exciting Spy Technology and toilet-based travel techniques, the Investigators are undercover and on the case!

COMING SOON:



*Special Undercover Investigation Teams

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Cover design by John Patrick Green and Andrew Arnold



First Second
New York